

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

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INTRODUCTION

ON AUGUST 4, 1600, the Stationers' Register records that 'The commedie of muche A doo about nothing' (along with 'As you like yt,' 'Henry the fift,' and 'Euery man in his humour') is 'to be staied.'¹ The meaning of this note is far from clear. Perhaps the actors, in accordance with their usual policy, were attempting to block publication. On August 23, however, MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING was regularly entered in the Register by Andrew Wyse and William Aspley.² Their edition (in quarto) came out before the end of the year.³ On this Quarto of 1600 is based the text of the present edition. In setting up the First Folio—which is less accurate than the Quarto, but supplies a number of corrections—the printers must have used a copy of the Quarto that had served as a prompt book and contained some manuscript changes, mostly in stage directions and speech headings.

Meres, in the list of Shakespeare's comedies which he gives in his *Palladis Tamia* (1598), does not mention MUCH ADO,⁴ but when the Quarto appeared, in 1600, the play had been 'sundrie times publikely acted' by the Lord Chamberlain's players (Shakespeare's company), as the title-page informs us. The part of Dogberry was taken by Will Kempe. This is proved by speech headings in the Quarto (iv, 2). Kempe left the Lord Chamberlain's Company early in 1599. Thus we may confidently fix the date of the play as the winter of 1598-99. Style and metre accord with this date. There is no good reason for regarding MUCH ADO as Shakespeare's reworking of an early drama of his own.⁵

¹Arber's *Transcript*, III, 37.

²Arber, III, 170.

³Much adoe about | Nothing. | *As it hath been sundrie times publikely* |
acted by the right honourable, the Lord | Chamberlaine his seruants. |
Written by William Shakespeare. | London | Printed by V[alentine].
S[ummes]. for Andrew Wise, and | Wilham Aspley. | 1600

⁴There is no likelihood that the mysterious 'Loue labours wonne' mentioned by Meres as one of Shakespeare's comedies, is MUCH ADO. It is much more likely to be *All's Well that Ends Well*, if, indeed, it is still in existence.

⁵For this theory see the arguments of Dover Wilson in his edition (1923), pp. 102 ff.

The main plot comes from the twenty-second story in Matteo Bandello's *Novelle* (1554), which Shakespeare may have read in the original or in the translation in Volume III of Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques* (1569). Bandello goes back, somehow, to the Greek romance of *Chareas and Callirhoe*, by one Chariton, who lived about the late fourth or early fifth century; but all this is prehistoric, so far as Shakespeare is concerned.

Bandello's *novella* may be summarized as follows:

King Piero of Aragon, having conquered Sicily, is holding court at Messina. One of his nobles, Timbreo di Cardone, is in love with Fenicia, the daughter of Messer Lionato de' Lionati, a gentleman of that city. A marriage is arranged. A cavalier, one Girondo Olerio Valenziano, a friend of Timbreo's, also loves Fenicia, and plots with an acquaintance, a young courtier 'more fond of evil than of good' (compare Shakespeare's Don John), to break off the match and win Fenicia for himself. This accomplice informs Timbreo that Fenicia is carrying on an intrigue with a certain gentleman and offers to give him ocular proof. That night he posts Timbreo in Lionato's garden. Girondo clothes a servant in fine attire and he and his accomplice go with the servant to the garden, accompanied by an attendant with a ladder on his shoulder. The family live on the other side of the palace, so that Girondo's servant can enter the house on the garden side without disturbing them. Timbreo sees him climb the ladder and go in at a window. Convinced of Fenicia's guilt, he leaves the garden without waiting to see the supposed lover come out. He has not recognized Girondo in the darkness and has no suspicion of his perfidy.

Next day Timbreo sends word to Lionato that he refuses to marry his daughter because of her unchastity. The messenger denounces Fenicia in the presence of her father and mother. Lionato accepts the breaking off of the match, but affirms his daughter's innocence and expresses the hope that God, the just judge, will bring the truth to light. Fenicia is overcome and lies cold and lifeless. A physician pronounces her dead, but she revives. Lionato decides to conceal the fact of her recovery.

Funeral rites are performed, a coffin is buried, and a tomb is built, on which is set up an epitaph in verse declaring her innocence (cf. *MUCH ADO*, v, 3). She is sent in secret to the country house of her uncle Girolamo. All Messina mourns her death.

Timbreo soon comes to his senses and begins to analyze the evidence, which, on consideration, he finds far from convincing. Gironde, thinking Fenicia dead, goes almost mad with remorse. He takes Timbreo to the tomb, gives him a dagger, and begs him to kill him 'as a sacrifice to the guiltless Fenicia.' He makes a full confession; but Timbreo refuses to strike: 'I should lose my friend,' he says, and 'Fenicia would not be restored to life.' They go to the house of Lionato, and Timbreo tells the whole story in the presence of Fenicia's father and mother and others of her kindred. They are forgiven, and Timbreo promises to take no wife except such a one as Lionato shall propose.

A year later Lionato tells Timbreo that he has in mind a wife he thinks suitable. They visit the villa where Fenicia (now called Lucilla) has taken refuge. She has grown so fast in the interval—she was only sixteen when the match was broken off—that she is unrecognizable, but she looks so much like Fenicia that Timbreo falls in love with her on the spot. She pardons him and they are married. That everything may be rounded off symmetrically, her sister, Belfiore, marries the repentant Gironde.

Before Bandello wrote, Ariosto had worked the ancient story into his *Orlando Furioso* (cantos iv-vi), attaching it to the adventures of Rinaldo in Scotland. He calls the lady Ginevra; her suitor is Ariodante. From Ariosto, either in the original or in Sir John Harington's translation (1591), Shakespeare derived the incident of the maid's guilelessly attiring herself as her mistress at the request of her villainous lover. Spenser repeats the tale (condensed and altered) in *The Faerie Queene* (ii, 4, 17-36), adapting it from Ariosto (compare stanza 26 with *Orlando Furioso*, v, 24-25, for a significant detail in this regard). Doubtless Shakespeare knew Spenser's version, which includes the maid's disguise; but that he had his eye on Ariosto seems cer-

¹See Thaler, *Studies in Philology*, XXXVII (1940), 225-235.

tain. His Claudio is challenged to mortal combat by Leonato and Antonio, and again by Benedick. There is nothing of the kind in either Bandello or Spenser, whereas in Ariosto the wager of battle (to determine the guilt or innocence of the heroine) is the very top of the narrative climax. Harington mentions a verse translation of Ariosto's story of Ginevra and Ariodante by George Turberville, of which nothing more is known.¹

- * In 1583 *A historie of Ariodante and Gineuora* was played at court by Richard Mulcaster's pupils, the boys of the Merchant Taylors' School.² Nothing more is known of it. That another lost play recorded as *Panecia* in 1574³ was really *Fenicia* (and based on Bandello) is a mere guess. *Panacia* (Πανάκεια) is quite as likely, and neither is probable. Jacob Ayser's German comedy of *Die Schöne Phancia* (ca. 1595)⁴ and Starter's Dutch *Timbre de Cardone ende Fenice van Messine*⁵ (both published in 1618) go back to Bandello, but neither throws any light on Shakespeare or his sources. There is no sound basis for the conjecture that our *MUCH ADO* is a reworking of any old play.

The time-scheme of *MUCH ADO* can be plotted with reasonable accuracy.⁶ The whole of Act I and the first (and probably the second) scene of Act II occur on Monday, for Hero's marriage is appointed for Monday—a week hence (II, I, 374–376). The interval between the second and the third scene of Act II cannot be exactly determined; but probably Scene III falls on Tuesday. Scenes I–III of Act III occur on Sunday, the day before the thwarted wedding, Scenes IV and V, the whole of Act IV, and the first two scenes of Act V occur on Monday, Hero's wedding

¹ The tale . . . hath bin written in English verse some few years past (learnedly & with good grace) though in verse of another kind, by M George Turbeuil' (*Orlando Furioso*, p. 39).

² Feuillerat, *Documents relating to the Office of the Revels*, 1908, p. 350.

³ Feuillerat, p. 238. Cf. Boas, *Much Ado*, 1916, p. xiii. Sir E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 1923, II, 88.

⁴ Ayser, *Diemen*, ed. von Keller, 1865. III, 2081 ff. A. Cohn, *Shakespeare in Germany*, 1865, pp. lxxi–lxxv, 77 ff.

⁵ Cohn, p. lxxv.

⁶ Cf. Daniel, *New Shakespeare Society Transactions*, 1877–79, p. 140.

day. Scene III of the last act takes place in the night that follows. Tuesday dawns at the close of this scene, and Scene IV brings the play to an end in the course of that same morning.

The merry war of Benedick and Beatrice and the verbal and logical contortions of Dogberry and Verges are Shakespeare's own Dogberry is foreshadowed by Dull the Constable in *Love's Labour's Lost* (1594), and Elbow reflects him in *Measure for Measure* (1604). Post-Shakespearean gossip identified him (more or less) with an unnamed constable of Grendon in Bucks. It so, he must have lived to a good old age.¹ He and his associates in the Police Department of Messina are not mere fun-makers. Of course we must laugh at them. We take unstinted delight in remembering that Dogberry is an ass, and we rejoice that Shakespeare has written him down in that capacity. But after all, these Malapropic watchmen are 'vigilant' enough to arrest the right man at the right moment. What more can one ask of any custodians of the public peace? It is Leonato's inevitable haste that cancels the instant effect of their promptitude and thus precipitates the almost tragic catastrophe at Hero's wedding. We, the audience, know the facts and, since we have come to the theatre to witness a comedy, we are not unduly agitated by the crisis. The examination of Borachio follows immediately and Leonato learns the truth.

The titular villain of *Much Ado* is Don John, Don Pedro's bastard brother. Don John is, by nature, a brooding malcontent. He has risen in fruitless rebellion against his legitimate brother and has been forgiven and restored to favour. But he cherishes that resentment which, in the corrupted currents of this world, a pardoned offender so often feels for his pardoner. Then, too, he is bitterly envious of 'the most exquisite' Claudio, who has

¹The Humour of the Constable in a *Midsommernight's Dreame*, he [Shakespeare] happened to take at Grendon in Bucks which is the roade from London to Stratford, and there was living that Constable about 1642 when I first came to Oxon. Mr Jos Howe is of that parish and knew him' (Aubrey, *Brief Lives*). See Sir E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare*, 1930, II, 253; cf. the edition of A. Clark, 1898, II, 226. Aubrey has confused titles in this note.

'all the glory of his overthrow' and is now Don Pedro's 'right hand.' Don John's 'spirits toil in frame of villanies.' For both plotting and action, however, he is entirely dependent on his henchman Borachio.

Poor Claudio has suffered unmerciful castigation at the hands of modern critics. Swinburne calls him 'a pitiful fellow.' Andrew Lang declares that 'he behaves throughout like the most hateful young cub.' Grace Trenery, though less harsh in language, is likewise condemnatory. She styles him 'a vain young sentimentalist.'¹ The onus of blame rests, obviously, not so much on Claudio's belief in Hero's guilt as on his plan to denounce and reject her at the marriage altar. But let us not forget that Don Pedro agrees heartily with Claudio in this plan (iii, 2, 129-130) and that it is Don Pedro who proclaims as an eye-witness (iv, 1, 89 ff):

Upon mine honour,
Myself, my brother, and this grievèd Count
Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night
Talk with a ruffian at her chamber window,
Who hath indeed, most like a liberal villain,
Confess'd the vile encounters they have had
A thousand times in secret

Even her father is convinced, and he takes her swoon as a confession:

Would the two princes lie? and Claudio lie,
Who lov'd her so that, speaking of her foulness,
Wash'd it with tears? Hence from her! let her die.

After all, we must remember that—though the scene at the wedding is Shakespeare's invention—the disgracing of Hero is the essential point in the ancient story, as the King's credulity is the essential point in the legend of Lear. Omit or modify it and we have lost the play.

The merry war between Benedick and Beatrice seems, at first, to be merely an underplot, but it soon becomes inextricable

¹Note, however, the defensive remarks of Quiller Couch in his and Wilson's edition, p. xiii

from the whole structure. Indeed, if comparisons were not odious, one might be tempted to agree with those critics who declare that it usurps the position of the main plot. At all events, *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING* ends with a dance. It is Benedick who bids the pipers strike up, and we remember that a star danced when Beatrice was born.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

[Dramatis Personæ.

Don Pedro, Prince of Arragon.

Don John, his bastard brother

Claudio, a young lord of Florence.

Benedick, a young lord of Padua.

Leonato, Governor of Messina

Antonio, an old man, his brother

Balthasar, attendant on *Don Pedro*.

Balthasar, } followers of *Don John*.

Conrade, }

Finn Francis

Dogberry, a Constable.

Verges, a Headborough.

A Sexton.

A Boy.

Hero, daughter to *Leonato*.

Beatrice, niece to *Leonato*.

Margaret, } waiting gentlewomen attending on *Hero*.

Ursula, }

Messengers, Watch, Attendants, &c

SCENE.—*Messina*.]

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

ACT I. Scene I. [*An orchard before Leonato's house*]

Enter *Leonato* (Governor of Messina), *Hero* (his Daughter),
and *Beatrice* (his Niece), with a *Messenger*.

Leon I learn in this letter that Don Pedro of Arragon comes
this night to Messina.

Mess. He is very near by this. He was not three leagues off
when I lett him.

Leon. How many gentlemen have you lost in this action? 5

Mess. But few of any sort, and none of name.

Leon. A victory is twice itself when the achiever brings home
full numbers. I find here that Don Pedro hath bestowed much
honour on a young Florentine called Claudio. 11

Mess. Much deserv'd on his part, and equally rememb'rd
by Don Pedro. He hath borne himself beyond the promise of
his age, doing in the figure of a lamb the feats of a lion. He
hath indeed better bett'rd expectation than you must expect of
me to tell you how. 17

Leon. He hath an uncle here in Messina will be very much
glad of it.

Mess. I have already delivered him letters, and there appears
much joy in him; even so much that joy could not show itself
modest enough without a badge of bitterness.

Leon. Did he break out into tears?

Mess. In great measure. 25

Leon A kind overflow of kindness. There are no faces truer
than those that are so wash'd. How much better is it to weep,
at joy than to joy at weeping! 31

Beat. I pray you, is Signior Mountanto return'd from the
wars or no? 31

Mess I know none of that name, lady. There was none such
in the army of any sort.

Leon. What is he that you ask for, niece?

Hero. My cousin means Signior Benedick of Padua 35

Mess. O, he's return'd, and as pleasant as ever he was

Beat. He set up his bills here in Messina and challeng'd Cupid at the flight, and my uncle's tool, reading the challenge, subscrib'd for Cupid and challeng'd him at the burbolt I pray you, how many hath he kill'd and eaten in these wars? But how many hath he kill'd? For indeed I promised to eat all of his killing 45

Leon. Faith, niece, you tax Signior Benedick too much; but he'll be meet with you, I doubt it not

Mess. He hath done good service, lady, in these wars

Beat. You had musty victual, and he hath holp to eat it He is a very valiant trencherman, he hath an excellent stomach. 52

Mess. And a good soldier too, lady.

Beat. And a good soldier to a lady; but what is he to a lord?

Mess. A lord to a lord, a man to a man, stuff'd with all honourable virtues 57

Beat. It is so indeed He is no less than a stuff'd man, but for the stuffing—well, we are all mortal. 60

Leon. You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her They never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them. 64

Beat. Alas, he gets nothing by that! In our last conflict four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man govern'd with one; so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse, for it is all the wealth that he hath left to be known a reasonable creature. Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn brother. 73

Mess. Is't possible?

Beat. Very easily possible He wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat; it ever changes with the next block. 77

Mess. I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.

Beat. No. An he were, I would burn my study. But I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no young squarer now that will make a voyage with him to the devil? 83

Mess. He is most in the company of the right noble Claudio.

Beat. O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease! He is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble Claudio! If he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere 'a be cured. 90

Mess. I will hold friends with you, lady.

Beat. Do, good friend.

Leon. You will never run mad, niece.

Beat. No, not till a hot January.

Mess. Don Pedro is approach'd. 95

*Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick, Balthasar,
and John the Bastard.*

Pedro. Good Signior Leonato, are you come to meet your trouble? The fashion of the world is to avoid cost, and you encounter it. 98

Leon. Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your Grace; for trouble being gone, comfort should remain; but when you depart from me, sorrow abides and happiness takes his leave.

Pedro. You embrace your charge too willingly. I think this is your daughter.

Leon. Her mother hath many times told me so. 105

Bene. Were you in doubt, sir, that you ask'd her?

Leon. Signior Benedick, no; for then were you a child.

Pedro. You have it full, Benedick. We may guess by this what you are, being a man. Truly the lady fathers herself. Be happy, lady; for you are like an honourable father. 113

Bene If Signior Leonato be her tather, she would not have his head on her shoulders for all Messina, as like him as she is.

Beat I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick. Nobody marks you.

Bene. What, my dear Lady Disdain! are you yet living? 120

Beat. Is it possible Disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain if you come in her presence. 124

Bene. Then is courtesy a turncoat. But it is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted, and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart, for truly I love none.

Beat A dear happiness to women! They would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that. I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me. 133

Bene. God keep your ladyship still in that mind! So some gentleman or other shall scape a predestinate scratch'd face.

Beat Scratching could not make it worse an 'twere such a face as yours were.

Bene. Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

Beat. A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours. 141

Bene. I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer. But keep your way, a God's name! I have done.

Beat. You always end with a jade's trick. I know you of old.

Pedro. That is the sum of all, Leonato. Signior Claudio and Signior Benedick, my dear friend Leonato hath invited you all. I tell him we shall stay here at the least a month, and he heartily prays some occasion may detain us longer. I dare swear he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart. • 153

Leon. If you swear, my lord, you shall not be forsworn. [*To Don John*] Let me bid you welcome, my lord. Being reconciled to the Prince your brother, I owe you all duty.

John I thank you. I am not of many words, but I thank you.

Leon. Please it your Grace lead on? 160

Pedro Your hand, Leonato. We will go together.

Exeunt. Manent Benedick and Claudio

Claud. Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signior Leonato? 164

Bene. I noted her not, but I look'd on her.

Claud. Is she not a modest young lady?

Bene. Do you question me, as an honest man should do, for my simple true judgment? or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to their sex? 170

Claud. No. I pray thee speak in sober judgment.

Bene. Why, i' faith, methinks she's too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise. Only this commendation I can afford her, that were she other than she is, she were unhandsome, and being no other but as she is, I do not like her.

Claud. Thou thinkest I am in sport. I pray thee tell me truly how thou lik'st her. 180

Bene. Would you buy her, that you enquire after her?

Claud. Can the world buy such a jewel?

Bene. Yea, and a case to put it into. But speak you this with a sad brow? or do you play the flouting Jack, to tell us Cupid is a good hare-finder and Vulcan a rare carpenter? Come, in what key shall a man take you to go in the song?

Claud. In mine eye she is the sweetest lady that ever I look'd on. 190

Bene. I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such matter. There's her cousin, an she were not possess'd with a fury, exceeds her as much in beauty as the first of May doth the last of December. But I hope you have no intent to turn husband; have you? 196

Claud. I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.

Bene. Is't come to this? In faith, hath not the world one man but he will wear his cap with suspicion? Shall I never see a bachelor of threescore again? Go to, i' faith! An thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it and sigh away Sundays.

Enter Don Pedro.

Look! Don Pedro is returned to seek you. 205

Pedro. What secret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonato's?

Bene. I would your Grace would constrain me to tell.

Pedro. I charge thee on thy allegiance. 210

Bene. You hear, Count Claudio. I can be secret as a dumb man, I would have you think so; but, on my allegiance—mark you this—on my allegiance! he is in love. With who? Now that is your Grace's part. Mark how short his answer is: With Hero, Leonato's short daughter.

Claud. If this were so, so were it utter'd.

Bene. Like the old tale, my lord: 'It is not so, nor 'twas not so; but indeed, God forbid it should be so!' 220

Claud. If my passion change not shortly, God forbid it should be otherwise.

Pedro. Amen, if you love her; for the lady is very well worthy.

Claud. You speak this to fetch me in, my lord. 225

Pedro. By my troth, I speak my thought.

Claud. And, in faith, my lord, I spoke mine.

Bene. And, by my two faiths and troths, my lord, I spoke mine.

Claud. That I love her, I feel. 230

Pedro. That she is worthy, I know.

Bene. That I neither feel how she should be loved, nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me. I will die in it at the stake. 235

Pedro. Thou wast ever an obstinate heretic in the despite of beauty.

Claud. And never could maintain his part but in the force of his will. 239

Bene. That a woman conceived me, I thank her; that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks; but that I will have a rechate winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invisible baldrick, all women shall pardon me. Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine is (for the which I may go the finer), I will live a bachelor.

Pedro. I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love. 250

Bene. With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord; not with love. Prove that ever I lose more blood with love than I will get again with drinking, pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen and hang me up at the door of a brothel house for the sign of blind Cupid. 256

Pedro. Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable argument.

Bene. If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat and shoot at me; and he that hits me, let him be clapp'd on the shoulder and call'd Adam

Pedro. Well, as time shall try. 262

'In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke.'

Bene. The savage bull may; but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns and set them in my forehead, and let me be vilely painted, and in such great letters as they write 'Here is good horse to hire,' let them signify under my sign 'Here you may see Benedick the married man.' 270

Claud. If this should ever happen, thou wouldst be horn-mad.

Pedro. Nay, if Cupid have not spent all his quiver in Venice, thou wilt quake for this shortly.

Bene. I look for an earthquake too then 275

Pedro. Well, you will temporize with the hours. In the meantime, good Signior Benedick, repair to Leonato's, commend me to him and tell him I will not fail him at supper; for indeed he hath made great preparation. 280

Bene. I have almost matter enough in me for such an embassy; and so I commit you—

Claud. To the tuition of God From my house—if I had it—

Pedro. The sixth of July. Your loving friend, Benedick. 286

Bene. Nay, mock not, mock not. The body of your discourse is sometime guarded with fragments, and the guards are but slightly basted on neither. Ere you flout old ends any further, examine your conscience And so I leave you. *Exit*

Claud. My liege, your Highness now may do me good. 292

Pedro. My love is thine to teach Teach it but how,
And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn
Any hard lesson that may do thee good. 295

Claud. Hath Leonato any son, my lord?

Pedro. No child but Hero; she's his only heir.
Dost thou affect her, Claudio?

Claud. O my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye,
That lik'd, but had a rougher task in hand 300
Than to drive liking to the name of love;
But now I am return'd and that war-thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
Come thronging soft and delicate desires, 305

All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying I lik'd her ere I went to wars

Pedro. Thou wilt be like a lover presently
And tire the hearer with a book of words.
If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it, 310
And I will break with her and with her father,
And thou shalt have her. Was't not to this end
That thou began'st to twist so fine a story?

Claud. How sweetly you do minister to love,
That know love's grief by his complexion! 315
But lest my liking might too sudden seem,
I would have salv'd it with a longer treatise.

Pedro. What need the bridge much broader than the flood?
The fairest grant is the necessity
Look, what will serve is fit 'Tis once, thou lovest, 320
And I will fit thee with the remedy.

I know we shall have revelling to-night.
I will assume thy part in some disguise
And tell fair Hero I am Claudio,
And in her bosom I'll unclasp my heart 325
And take her hearing prisoner with the force
And strong encounter of my amorous tale.
Then after to her father will I break,
And the conclusion is, she shall be thine.

In practice let us put it presently *Exeunt.*

[Scene II. A room in Leonato's house.]

Enter [at one door] *Leonato* and [at another door, *Antonio*,]
an old man, brother to *Leonato*.

Leon. How now, brother? Where is my cousin your son?
Hath he provided this music?

Ant. He is very busy about it But, brother, I can tell you strange news that you yet dreamt not of. 5

Leon. Are they good?

Ant. As the event stamps them; but they have a good cover, they show well outward. The Prince and Count Claudio, walking in a thick-pleached alley in mine orchard, were thus much overheard by a man of mine: the Prince discovered to Claudio that he loved my niece your daughter and meant to acknowledge it this night in a dance, and if he found her accordant, he meant to take the present time by the top and instantly break with you of it 16

Leon. Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

Ant. A good sharp fellow I will send for him, and question him yourself 20

Leon. No, no We will hold it as a dream till it appear itself; but I will acquaint my daughter withal, that she may be the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be true. Go you and tell her of it. [Exit Antonio] 16

[Enter Antonio's Son with a Musician, and others.]

[To the Son] Cousin, you know what you have to do.—[To the Musician] O, I cry you mercy, friend. Go you with me, and I will use your skill—Good cousin, have a care this busy time Exeunt

[Scene III Another room in Leonato's house.]

Enter Sir John the Bastard and Comrade, his companion.

Con. What the goodyear, my lord! Why are you thus out of measure sad?

John. There is no measure in the occasion that breeds, therefore the sadness is without limit.

Con You should hear reason.

John. And when I have heard it, what blessings brings it?

Con If not a present remedy, at least a patient sufferance. 10

John I wonder that thou (being, as thou say'st thou art, born under Saturn) goest about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief. I cannot hide what I am I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests; eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure, sleep when I am drowsy, and tend on no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw no man in his humour 19

Con Yea, but you must not make the full show of this till you may do it without controlment You have of late stood out against your brother, and he hath ta'en you newly into his grace, where it is impossible you should take true root but by the fair weather that you make yourself It is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest. 27

John. I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace, and it better fits my blood to be disdain'd of all than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any. In this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain I am trusted with a muzzle and enfranchis'd with a clog; therefore I have decreed not to sing in my cage. If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking In the meantime let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

Con. Can you make no use of your discontent? 40

John. I make all use of it, for I use it only.

Enter *Borachio*

Who comes here? What news, Borachio?

Bor. I came yonder from a great supper. The Prince your brother is royally entertain'd by Leonato, and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

John. Will it serve for any model to build mischief on?
What is he for a fool that betroths himself to unquietness? 50

Bora. Marry, it is your brother's right hand.

John. Who? the most exquisite Claudio?

Bora. Even he

John. A proper squire! And who? and who? which way
looks he? 55

Bora. Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato

John. A very forward March-chick! How came you to this?

Bora. Being entertain'd for a perfumer, as I was smoking a
musty room, comes me the Prince and Claudio, hand in hand
in sad conference I whipt me behind the arras and there heard
it agreed upon that the Prince should woo Hero for himself, and
having obtain'd her, give her to Count Claudio 66

John. Come, come, let us thither. This may prove food to
my displeasure That young start-up hath all the glory of my
overthrow. It I can cross him any way, I bless myself every
way You are both sure, and will assist me? 71

Con. To the death, my lord

John. Let us to the great supper. Their cheer is the greater
that I am subdued. Would the cook were o' my mind! Shall
we go prove what's to be done? 76

Bora. We'll wait upon your lordship.

Exeunt.

ACT II. [Scene I. *A hall in Leonato's house.*]

Enter *Leonato*, [*Antonio*] his Brother, *Hero* his Daughter, and *Beatrice* his Niece, and a *Kinsman*, [also *Margaret* and *Ursula*]

Leon. Was not Count John here at supper?

Ant. I saw him not.

Beat. How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him but I am heart-burn'd an hour after. 5

Hero He is of a very melancholy disposition.

Beat. He were an excellent man that were made just in the midway between him and Benedick. The one is too like an image and says nothing, and the other too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling. 11

Leon. Then half Signior Benedick's tongue in Count John's mouth, and half Count John's melancholy in Signior Benedick's face— 14

Beat. With a good leg and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world—if 'a could get her good will.

Leon. By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue. 21

Ant. In faith, she's too curst.

Beat. Too curst is more than curst. I shall lessen God's sending that way, for it is said, 'God sends a curst cow short horns,' but to a cow too curst he sends none. 26

Leon. So, by being too curst, God will send you no horns.

Beat. Just, if he send me no husband; for the which blessing I am at him upon my knees every morning and evening. Lord, I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face. I had rather lie in the woollen!

Leon. You may light on a husband that hath no beard 35

Beat. What should I do with him? dress him in my apparel and make him my waiting gentlewoman? He that hath a

beard is more than a youth, and he that hath no beard is less than a man, and he that is more than a youth is not for me, and he that is less than a man, I am not for him. Therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the berrord and lead his apes into hell.

Leon. Well then, go you into hell?

44

Beat. No; but to the gate, and there will the devil meet me like an old cuckold with horns on his head, and say 'Get you to heaven, Beatrice, get you to heaven. Here's no place for you maids.' So deliver I up my apes, and away to Saint Peter—for the heavens. He shows me where the bachelors sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

Ant. [*to Hero*] Well, niece, I trust you will be rul'd by your father.

54

Beat. Yes faith. It is my cousin's duty to make cursy and say, 'Father, as it please you.' But yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another cursy, and say, 'Father, as it please me.'

Leon. Well, niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.

61

Beat. Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be overmaster'd with a piece of valiant dust? to make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I'll none. Adam's sons are my brethren, and truly I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.

Leon. Daughter, remember what I told you. If the Prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer.

71

Beat. The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good time. If the Prince be too important, tell him there is measure in everything, and so dance out the answer. For, hear me, Hero: wooing, wedding, and repenting is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace. the first suit is hot and hasty like a Scotch jig—and full as fantastical; the wed-

ding, mannerly modest, as a measure, full of state and ancientry; and then comes Repentance and with his bad legs falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave

Leon Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly 84

Beat. I have a good eye, uncle; I can see a church by daylight

Leon The revellers are ent'ring, brother. Make good room.

[*Exit Antonio*]

Enter, [masked,] *Don Pedro*, *Claudio*, *Benedick*, and *Balthasar*.

[With them enter *Antonio*, also masked. After them enter]

Don John [and *Borachio* (without masks), who stand aside and look on during the dance].

Pedro. Lady, will you walk a bout with your friend? 90

Hero So you walk softly and look sweetly and say nothing,
I am yours for the walk, and especially when I walk away

Pedro. With me in your company?

Hero. I may say so when I please. 95

Pedro. And when please you to say so?

Hero. When I like your favour, for God defend the lute
should be like the case!

Pedro. My visor is Philemon's roof, within the house is Jove.

Hero. Why then, your visor should be thatch'd. 101

Pedro. Speak low if you speak love. [*Takes her aside.*]

Balth. Well, I would you did like me.

Marg. So would not I for your own sake, for I have many
all qualities. 106

Balth. Which is one?

Marg. I say my prayers aloud.

Balth. I love you the better. The hearers may cry Amen. 110

Marg. God match me with a good dancer!

Balth. Amen.

Marg. And God keep him out of my sight when the dance
is done! Answer, clerk.

Balth. No more words. The clerk is answered. 115

[*Takes her aside.*]

Urs. I know you well enough. You are Signior Antonio.

Ant. At a word, I am not.

Urs. I know you by the waggling of your head.

Ant. To tell you true, I counterfeit him. 120

Urs. You could never do him so ill-well unless you were the very man. Here's his dry hand up and down. You are he, you are he!

Ant. At a word, I am not. 125

Urs. Come, come, do you think I do not know you by your excellent wit? Can virtue hide itself? Go to, mum, you are he. Graces will appear, and there's an end. [*They step aside*]

Beat. Will you not tell me who told you so? 130

Bene. No, you shall pardon me.

Beat. Nor will you not tell me who you are?

Bene. Not now.

Beat. That I was disdainful, and that I had my good wit out of the 'Hundred Merry Tales.' Well, this was Signior Benedick that said so. 136

Bene. What's he?

Beat. I am sure you know him well enough.

Bene. Not I, believe me.

Beat. Did he never make you laugh? 140

Bene. I pray you, what is he?

Beat. Why, he is the Prince's jester, a very dull fool. Only his gift is in devising impossible slanders. None but libertines delight in him; and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villany; for he both pleases men and angers them, and then they laugh at him and beat him. I am sure he is in the fleet. I would he had boarded me.

Bene. When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say. 151

Beat Do, do. He'll but break a comparison or two on me; which peradventure, not marked or not laugh'd at, strikes him into melancholy, and then there's a partridge wing saved, for the fool will eat no supper that night.

[*Music.*]

We must follow the leaders

Bene. In every good thing

Beat Nay, if they lead to any ill, I will leave them at the next turning 166

Dance Exeunt [all but Don John, Borachio, and Claudio].

John. Sure my brother is amorous on Hero and hath withdrawn her father to break with him about it. The ladies follow her and but one visor remains

Bora. And that is Claudio. I know him by his bearing 167

John. Are you not Signior Benedick?

Claud. You know me well. I am he

John Signior, you are very near my brother in his love He is enamour'd on Hero. I pray you dissuade him from her; she is no equal for his birth You may do the part of an honest man in it.

Claud How know you he loves her?

John. I heard him swear his affection. 175

Bora. So did I too, and he swore he would marry her to-night

John. Come, let us to the banquet

Exeunt. Manet Claudio.

Claud. Thus answer I in name of Benedick

But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio. 180

[*Unmasks.*]

'Tis certain so. The Prince wooes for himself.

Friendship is constant in all other things

Save in the office and affairs of love.

Therefore all hearts in love use their own tongues;

Let every eye negotiate for itself 185
And trust no agent, for beauty is a witch
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.
This is an accident of hourly proof,
Which I mistrusted not Farewell therefore Hero!

Enter *Benedick* [unmasked].

Bene. Count Claudio? 190

Claud Yea, the same.

Bene. Come, will you go with me?

Claud Whither?

Bene Even to the next willow, about your own business,
County What fashion will you wear the garland of? about
your neck, like an usurer's chain? or under your arm, like a
lieutenant's scarf? You must wear it one way, for the Prince
hath got your Hero.

Claud. I wish him joy of her. 200

Bene. Why, that's spoken like an honest drovier. So they
sell bullocks But did you think the Prince would have served
you thus?

Claud. I pray you leave me.

Bene. Ho! now you strike like the blind man! 'Twas the
boy that stole your meat, and you'll beat the post. 207

Claud. If it will not be, I'll leave you. *Exit*

Bene. Alas, poor hurt fowl! now will he creep into sedges
But, that my Lady Beatrice should know me, and not know
me! The Prince's fool! Ha! it may be I go under that title be-
cause I am merry. Yea, but so I am apt to do myself wrong.
I am not so reputed. It is the base (though bitter) disposition of
Beatrice that puts the world into her person and so gives me
out. Well, I'll be revenged as I may 217

Enter *Don Pedro*

Pedro. Now, signior, where's the Count? Did you see him?

Bene. Troth, my lord, I have played the part of Lady Fame I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren I told him, and I think I told him true, that your Grace had got the good will of this young lady, and I off'ed him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipt.

Pedro. To be whipt? What's his fault?

Bene. The flat transgression of a schoolboy who, being overjoyed with finding a bird's nest, shows it his companion, and he steals it

231

Pedro. Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? The transgression is in the stealer.

Bene. Yet it had not been amiss the rod had been made, and the garland too, for the garland he might have worn himself, and the rod he might have bestowed on you, who, as I take it, have stol'n his bird's nest

Pedro. I will but teach them to sing and restore them to the owner.

240

Bene. If their singing answer your saying, by my faith you say honestly

Pedro. The Lady Beatrice hath a quarrel to you. The gentleman that danc'd with her told her she is much wrong'd by you

245

Bene. O, she misus'd me past the endurance of a block! An oak but with one green leaf on it would have answered her; my very visor began to assume life and scold with her She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the Prince's jester, that I was duller than a great thaw; huddling jest upon jest with such impossible conveyance upon me that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me She

speaks poniards, and every word stabs. If her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no living near her; she would infect to the North Star. I would not marry her though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgress'd. She would have made Hercules have turn'd spit, yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too. Come, talk not of her. You shall find her the infernal Ate in good apparel. I would to God some scholar would conjure her, for certainly, while she is here, a man may live as quiet in hell as in a sanctuary; and people sin upon purpose, because they would go thither; so indeed all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follows her.

Enter *Claudio* and *Beatrice*, *Leonato*, *Hero*.

Pedro. Look, here she comes. 271

Bene. Will your Grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand now to the Antipodes that you can devise to send me on, I will fetch you a toothpicker now from the furthest inch of Asia; bring you the length of Prester John's foot; fetch you a hair off the great Cham's beard; do you any embassy to the Pygmies—rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy. You have no employment for me? 280

Pedro. None, but to desire your good company.

Bene. O God, sir, here's a dish I love not! I cannot endure my Lady Tongue. *Exit.*

Pedro. Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of Signior Benedick. 286

Beat. Indeed, my lord, he lent it me awhile, and I gave him use for it—a double heart for his single one. Marry, once before he won it of me with false dice; therefore your Grace may well say I have lost it. 291

Pedro. You have put him down, lady; you have put him down

Beat. So I would not he should do me, my lord, lest I should prove the mother of fools. I have brought Count Claudio, whom you sent me to seek

Pedro. Why, how now, Count? Wherefore are you sad?

Claud. Not sad, my lord. 300

Pedro. How then? sick?

Claud. Neither, my lord.

Beat. The Count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but civil count—civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion 306

Pedro. I' faith, lady, I think your blazon to be true; though I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false. Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won. I have broke with her father, and his good will obtained Name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy! 312

Leon. Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes His Grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it! 315

Beat. Speak, Count, 'tis your cue

Claud. Silence is the perfectest herald of joy. I were but little happy if I could say how much. Lady, as you are mine, I am yours. I give away myself for you and dote upon the exchange.

Beat. Speak, cousin, or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss and let not him speak neither. 323

Pedro. In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

Beat. Yea, my lord; I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care. My cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

Claud. And so she doth, cousin. 329

Beat. Good Lord, for alliance! Thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sunburnt I may sit in a corner and cry 'Heigh-ho for a husband!'

Pedro. Lady Beatrice, I will get you one. 334

Beat. I would rather have one of your father's getting Hath your Grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

Pedro. Will you have me, lady? 339

Beat. No, my lord, unless I might have another for working days: your Grace is too costly to wear every day But I beseech your Grace pardon me. I was born to speak all mirth and no matter. 344

Pedro. Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you, for out o' question you were born in a merry hour.

Beat. No, sure, my lord, my mother cried, but then there was a star danc'd, and under that was I born. Cousins, God give you joy! 350

Leon. Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

Beat. I cry you mercy, uncle By your Grace's pardon. *Exit.*

Pedro. By my troth, a pleasant-spirited lady. 355

Leon. There's little of the melancholy element in her, my lord. She is never sad but when she sleeps, and not ever sad then; for I have heard my daughter say she hath often dreamt of unhappiness and wak'd herself with laughing. 361

Pedro. She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband.

Leon. O, by no means! She mocks all her wooers out of suit. 365

Pedro. She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

Leon. O Lord, my lord! if they were but a week married, they would talk themselves mad. 369

Pedro. County Claudio, when mean you to go to church?

Claud. To-morrow, my lord. Time goes on crutches till love have all his rites.

Leon. Not till Monday, my dear son, which is hence a just sevennight, and a time too brief too, to have all things answer my mind. 376

Pedro. Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing, but I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us. I will in the interim undertake one of Hercules' labours, which is, to bring Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection th' one with th' other. I would fain have it a match, and I doubt not but to fashion it if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction. 386

Leon. My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights' watchings.

Claud. And I, my lord.

Pedro. And you too, gentle Hero? 390

Hero. I will do any modest office, my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband.

Pedro. And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know. Thus far can I praise him. he is of a noble strain, of approved valour, and confirm'd honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedick; and I, [*to Leonato and Claudio*] with your two helps, will so practise on Benedick that, in despite of his quick wit and his queasy stomach, he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer, his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love-gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift. *Excunt.*

[Scene II. *A hall in Leonato's house.*]

Enter [*Don*] *John* and *Borachio*.

John. It is so. The Count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

Bora. Yea, my lord, but I can cross it.

John. Any bar, any cross, any impediment will be med'cinable to me. I am sick in displeasure to him, and whatsoever comes athwart his affection ranges evenly with mine. How canst thou cross this marriage?

Bora. Not honestly, my lord, but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me. 10

John. Show me briefly how.

Bora. I think I told your lordship, a year since, how much I am in the favour of Margaret, the waiting gentlewoman to Hero

John. I remember. 15

Bora. I can, at any unseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to look out at her lady's chamber window.

John. What life is in that to be the death of this marriage? 20

Bora. The poison of that lies in you to temper. Go you to the Prince your brother; spare not to tell him that he hath wronged his honour in marrying the renowned Claudio (whose estimation do you mightily hold up) to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero. 26

John. What proof shall I make of that?

Bora. Proof enough to misuse the Prince, to vex Claudio, to undo Hero, and kill Leonato. Look you for any other issue? 30

John. Only to despise them I will endeavour anything.

Bora. Go then; find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and the Count Claudio alone; tell them that you know that Hero loves me; intend a kind of zeal both to the Prince and Claudio, as—in love of your brother's honour, who hath made this match, and his friend's reputation, who is thus like to be cozen'd with the semblance of a maid—that you have discover'd thus. They will scarcely believe this without trial. Offer them instances; which shall bear no less likelihood than to see me at her chamber window, hear me call Margaret Hero, hear Margaret term me Claudio; and bring them to see this the very

night before the intended wedding (for in the meantime I will so fashion the matter that Hero shall be absent) and there shall appear such seeming truth of Hero's disloyalty that jealousy shall be call'd assurance and all the preparation overthrown 51

John Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

Rosa Be you constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me. 56

John I will presently go learn their day of marriage *Exeunt*

[Scene III Leonato's orchard]

Enter *Benedick* alone.

Bene. Boy!

[Enter *Boy*]

Boy Signior?

Bene. In my chamber window lies a book. Bring it hither to me in the orchard

Boy I am here already, sir 5

Bene. I know that, but I would have thee hence and here again. (*Exit Boy*) I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laugh'd at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love; and such a man is Claudio. I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe. I have known when he would have walk'd ten mile afoot to see a good armour, and now will he lie ten nights awake carving the fashion of a new doublet He was wont to speak plain and to the purpose,

like an honest man and a soldier, and now is he turn'd orthography; his words are a very fantastical banquet—just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not. I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair, yet I am well, another is wise, yet I am well; another virtuous, yet I am well, but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her, fair, or I'll never look on her, mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel, of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what colour it please God. Ha, the Prince and Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbour. [Hides]

Enter *Don Pedro, Leonato, Claudio*.

Music [within].

Pedro. Come, shall we hear this music?

Claud. Yea, my good lord. How still the evening is, 40
As hush'd on purpose to grace harmony!

Pedro. See you where Benedick hath hid himself?

Claud. O, very well, my lord. The music ended,
We'll fit the kid-fox with a pennyworth.

Enter *Balthasar* with *Music*.

Pedro. Come, Balthasar, we'll hear that song again. 45

Balth. O, good my lord, tax not so bad a voice
To slander music any more than once.

Pedro. It is the witness still of excellency
To put a strange face on his own perfection.
I pray thee sing, and let me woo no more. 50

Balth Because you talk of wooing, I will sing,
 Since many a wooer doth commence his suit
 To her he thinks not worthy, yet he wooes,
 Yet will he swear he loves.

Pedro Nay, pray thee come;
 Or if thou wilt hold longer argument, 55
 Do it in notes.

Balth Note this before my notes:
 There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.

Pedro Why, these are very crotchets that he speaks!
 Note notes, forsooth, and nothing! [Music.]

Bene [aside] Now divine air! Now is his soul ravish'd!
 Is it not strange that sheep's guts should hale souls out of
 men's bodies? Well, a horn for my money, when all's done.

[*Balthasar sings*]

The Song

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more!
 Men were deceivers ever, 65

One foot in sea, and one on shore,
 To one thing constant never.

Then sigh not so, "

But let them go,

And be you blithe and bonny,
 Converting all your sounds of woe 70
 Into Hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe,
 Of dumps so dull and heavy!

The fraud of men was ever so,
 Since summer first was leavy. 75

Then sigh not so, &c.

Pedro. By my troth, a good song

Balth. And art a singer, my lord.

Pedro. Ha, no, no, faith! Thou sing'st well enough for a shift. 80

Bene. [*aside*] An he had been a dog that should have howl'd thus, they would have hang'd him, and I pray God his bad voice bode no mischief. I had as live have heard the night raven, come what plague could have come after it 85

Pedro. Yea, marry. Dost thou hear, Balthasar? I pray thee get us some excellent music; for to-morrow night we would have it at the Lady Hero's chamber window.

Balth. The best I can, my lord 90

Pedro. Do so. Farewell.

Exit Balthasar [with Musicians].

Come hither, Leonato. What was it you told me of to-day? that your niece Beatrice was in love with Signior Benedick? 94

Claud. O, ay!—[*Aside to Pedro*] Stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits.—I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

Leon. No, nor I neither, but most wonderful that she should so dote on Signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviours seem'd ever to abhor. 101

Bene. [*aside*] Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner?

Leon. By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it, but that she loves him with an enraged affection. It is past the infinite of thought. 106

Pedro. May be she doth but counterfeit.

Claud. Faith, like enough

Leon. O God, counterfeit? There was never counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion as she discovers it. 111

Pedro. Why, what effects of passion shows she?

Claud. [*aside*] Bait the hook well! This fish will bite

Leon. What effects, my lord? She will sit you—you heard my daughter tell you how. 116

Claud. She did indeed.

Pedro. How, how, I pray you? You amaze me. I would

have thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection. 120

Leon. I would have sworn it had, my lord—especially against Benedick.

Bene. [*aside*] I should think this a gull but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it. Knavery cannot, sure, hide himself in such reverence 125

Claud. [*aside*] He hath ta'en th' infection. Hold it up.

Pedro. Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

Leon. No, and swears she never will. That's her torment

Claud. 'Tis true indeed. So your daughter says. 'Shall I,' says she, 'that have so oft encount'ed him with scorn, write to him that I love him?' 134

Leon. This says she now when she is beginning to write to him; for she'll be up twenty times a night, and there will she sit in her smock till she have writ a sheet of paper. My daughter tells us all. 139

Claud. Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

Leon. O, when she had writ it, and was reading it over, she found 'Benedick' and 'Beatrice' between the sheet?

Claud. That. 145

Leon. O, she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence, rail'd at herself that she should be so immodest to write to one that she knew would flout her 'I measure him,' says she, 'by my own spirit; for I should flout him if he writ to me. Yea, though I love him, I should.' 151

Claud. Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps, sobs, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, curses—'O sweet Benedick! God give me patience!' 155

Leon. She doth indeed; my daughter says so. And the ecstasy hath so much overborne her that my daughter is sometime afraid she will do a desperate outrage to herself. It is very true.

Pedro. It were good that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it. 161

Claud. To what end? He would make but a sport of it and torment the poor lady worse.

Pedro. An he should, it were an alms to hang him! She's an excellent sweet lady, and (out of all suspicion) she is virtuous 166

Claud And she is exceeding wise.

Pedro. In everything but in loving Benedick.

Leon. O, my lord, wisdom and blood combating in so tender a body, we have ten proofs to one that blood hath the victory I am sorry for her, as I have just cause, being her uncle and her guardian. 174

Pedro. I would she had bestowed this dotage on me. I would have daff'd all other respects and made her half myself. I pray you tell Benedick of it and hear what 'a will say

Leon Were it good, think you? 179

Claud. Hero thinks surely she will die, for she says she will die if he love her not, and she will die ere she make her love known, and she will die, if he woo her, rather than she will bate one breath of her accustomed crossness. 184

Pedro. She doth well. If she should make tender of her love, 'tis very possible he'll scorn it; for the man (as you know all) hath a contemptible spirit.

Claud He is a very proper man.

Pedro He hath indeed a good outward happiness. 190

Claud. Before God! and in my mind, very wise.

Pedro. He doth indeed show some sparks that are like wit.

Claud. And I take him to be valiant.

Pedro. As Hector, I assure you; and in the managing of quarrels you may say he is wise, for either he avoids them with great discretion, or undertakes them with a most Christianlike fear. 200

Leon. If he do fear God, 'a must necessarily keep peace. If he break the peace, he ought to enter into a quarrel with fear and trembling.

Pedro. And so will he do, for the man doth fear God, howsoever it seems not in him by some large jests he will make. Well, I am sorry for your niece. Shall we go seek Benedick and tell him of her love?

Claud. Never tell him, my lord. Let her wear it out with good counsel. 210

Leon. Nay, that's impossible, she may wear her heart out first.

Pedro. Well, we will hear further of it by your daughter. Let it cool the while. I love Benedick well, and I could wish he would modestly examine himself to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady.

Leon. My lord, will you walk? Dinner is ready.

[*They walk away*]

Claud. If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expectation. 220

Pedro. Let there be the same net spread for her, and that must your daughter and her gentlewomen carry. The sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of another's dotage, and no such matter. That's the scene that I would see, which will be merely a dumb show. Let us send her to call him in to dinner.

Exeunt [*Don Pedro, Claudio, and Leonato*].

[*Benedick* advances from the arbour.]

Bene. This can be no trick. The conference was sadly borne, they have the truth of this from Hero; they seem to pity the lady. It seems her affections have their full bent. Love me? Why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censur'd. They say I will bear myself proudly if I perceive the love come from her. They say too that she will rather die than give any sign of affection.

I did never think to marry. I must not seem proud. Happy are they that hear their detractions and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair—'tis a truth, I can bear them witness; and virtuous—'tis so, I cannot reprove it, and wise, but for loving me—by my troth, it is no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me because I have railed so long against marriage. But doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humour? No, the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. 253

Enter Beatrice.

Here comes Beatrice. By this day, she's a fair lady! I do spy some marks of love in her.

Beat. Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

Bene. Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

Beat. I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me. If it had been painful, I would not have come 261

Bene. You take pleasure then in the message?

Beat. Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point, and choke a daw withal. You have no stomach, signior. Fare you well *Exit*

Bene. Ha! 'Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.' There's a double meaning in that. 'I took no more pains for those thanks than you took pains to thank me' That's as much as to say, 'Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks.' If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew. I will go get her picture. *Exit.*

ACT III. [Scene I. Leonato's orchard.]

Enter *Hero* and two *Gentlewomen*, *Margaret* and *Ursula*

Hero. Good Margaret, run thee to the parlour.
There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice
Proposing with the Prince and Claudio.
Whisper her ear and tell her, I and Ursley
Walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse
Is all of her. Say that thou overheard'st us;
And bid her steal into the pleached bower,
Where honeysuckles, ripened by the sun,
Forbid the sun to enter—like favourites,
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride 10
Against that power that bred it. There will she hide her
To listen our propose. This is thy office.
Bear thee well in it and leave us alone.

Marg. I'll make her come; I warrant you, presently. [*Exit.*]

Hero. Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come, 15
As we do trace this alley up and down,
Our talk must only be of Benedick. .
When I do name him, let it be thy part
To praise him more than ever man did merit.
My talk to thee must be how Benedick 20
Is sick in love with Beatrice. Of this matter
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay.

Enter *Beatrice*.

Now begin;
For look where Beatrice like a lapwing runs
Close by the ground, to hear our conference. 25
[*Beatrice hides in the arbour.*]

Urs. The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish
Cut with her golden oars the silver stream
And greedily devour the treacherous bait.
So angle we for Beatrice, who even now
Is couched in the woodbine coverture 30
Fear you not my part of the dialogue

Hero Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing
Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it.

[*They approach the arbour.*]

No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful
I know her spirits are as coy and wild 35
As haggards of the rock.

Urs. But are you sure
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?

Hero So says the Prince, and my new-trothed lord.

Urs. And did they bid you tell her of it, madam?

Hero They did entreat me to acquaint her of it; 40
But I persuaded them, if they lov'd Benedick,
To wish him wrestle with affection
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

Urs. Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full, as fortunate a bed 45
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?

Hero. O god of love! I know he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man;
But Nature never fram'd a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice. 50
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprizing what they look on; and her wit
Values itself so highly that to her
All matter else seems weak. She cannot love,
'Nor take no shape nor project of affection, 55
She is so self-endear'd.

Urs.

Sure I think so;

And therefore certainly it were not good
She knew his love, lest she'll make sport at it.

Hero. Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man,

How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featur'd, 60

But she would spell him backward If fair-fac'd,

She would swear the gentleman should be her sister,

If black, why, Nature, drawing of an antic,

Made a foul blot; if tall, a lance ill-headed;

If low, an agate very vilely cut; 65

If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds;

If silent, why, a block moved with none.

So turns she every man the wrong side out

And never gives to truth and virtue that

Which simpleness and merit purchaseth. 70

Urs. Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable*Hero.* No, not to be so odd, and from all fashions,

As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable

But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,

She would mock me into air. O, she would laugh me 75

Out of myself, press me to death with wit!

Therefore let Benedick, like cover'd fire,

Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly.

It were a better death than die with mocks,

Which is as bad as die with tickling. 80

Urs. Yet tell her of it. Hear what she will say.*Hero.* No; rather I will go to Benedick

And counsel him to fight against his passion.

And truly, I'll devise some honest slanders

To stain my cousin with. One doth not know 85

How much an ill word may empoison liking.

Urs. O, do not do your cousin such a wrong!

She cannot be so much without true judgment

(Having so swift and excellent a wit
As she is priz'd to have) as to refuse 90
So rare a gentleman as Signior Benedick.

Hero He is the only man of Italy,
Always excepted my dear Claudio.

Urs. I pray you be not angry with me, madam,
Speaking my fancy Signior Benedick, 95
For shape, for bearing, argument, and valour,
Goes foremost in report through Italy.

Hero. Indeed he hath an excellent good name.

Urs. His excellence did earn it ere he had it.
When are you married, madam? 100

Hero. Why, every day to-morrow! Come, go in.
I'll show thee some attires, and have thy counsel
Which is the best to furnish me to-morrow

[*They walk away*]

Urs. She's lim'd, I warrant you! We have caught her,
madam.

Hero If it prove so, then loving goes by haps; 105
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps

Exeunt [Hero and Ursula].

[*Beatrice* advances from the arbour.]

Beat. What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!

No glory lives behind the back of such 110
And, Benedick, love on, I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand.
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee

To bind our loves up in a holy band;
For others say thou dost deserve, and I 115
Believe it better than reportingly. *Exit*

[Scene II. A room in Leonato's house.]

Enter *Don Pedro*, *Claudio*, *Benedick*, and *Leonato*.

Pedro. I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then go I toward Arragon.

Claud. I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe me

Pedro. Nay, that would be as great a soil in the new gloss of your marriage as to show a child his new coat and forbid him to wear it. I will only be bold with *Benedick* for his company; for, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth. He hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bowstring, and the little hangman dare not shoot at him. He hath a heart as sound as a bell; and his tongue is the clapper, for what his heart thinks, his tongue speaks.

Bene. Gallants, I am not as I have been. 15

Leon. So say I. Methinks you are sadder.

Claud. I hope he be in love.

Pedro. Hang him, truant! There's no true drop of blood in him to be truly touch'd with love. If he be sad, he wants money.

Bene. I have the toothache. 21

Pedro. Draw it.

Bene. Hang it!

Claud. You must hang it first and draw it afterwards. 25

Pedro. What? sigh for the toothache?

Leon. Where is but a humour or a worm.

Bene. Well, every one can master a grief but he that has it.

Claud. Yet say I he is in love 30

Pedro. There is no appearance of fancy in him, unless it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises; as to be a Dutchman to-day, a Frenchman to-morrow; or in the shape of two countries at once, as a German from the waist downward, all slops, and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet. Unless he

have a fancy to this foolery, as it appears he hath, he is no fool for fancy, as you would have it appear he is

Claud. If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing old signs. 'A brushes his hat o' mornings What should that bode? 42

Pedro. Hath any man seen him at the barber's?

Claud. No, but the barber's man hath been seen with him, and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuff'd tennis balls 47

Leon. Indeed he looks younger than he did, by the loss of a beard.

Pedro. Nay, 'a rubs himself with civet. Can you smell him out by that? 51

Claud. That's as much as to say, the sweet youth's in love.

Pedro. The greatest note of it is his melancholy. 55

Claud. And when was he wont to wash his face?

Pedro. Yea, or to paint himself? for the which I hear what they say of him.

Claud. Nay, but his jesting spirit, which is new-crept into a lutestring, and now govern'd by stops. 62

Pedro. Indeed that tells a heavy tale for him. Conclude, conclude, he is in love.

Claud. Nay, but I know who loves him. 65

Pedro. That would I know too. I warrant, one that knows him not.

Claud. Yes, and his ill conditions; and in despite of all, dies for him.

Pedro. She shall be buried with her face upwards. 70

Bene. Yet is this no charm for the toothache. Old signior, walk aside with me. I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which these hobby-horses must not hear.

[*Excunt Benedick and Leonato.*]

Pedro. For my life, to break with him about Beatrice!

Claud 'Tis even so. Hero and Margaret have by this played their parts with Beatrice, and then the two bears will not bite one another when they meet. 81

Enter *John the Bastard*.

John. My lord and brother, God save you.

Pedro. Good den, brother.

John. If your leisure serv'd, I would speak with you. 85

Pedro. In private?

John If it please you. Yet Count Claudio may hear, for what I would speak of concerns him.

Pedro. What's the matter? 90

John [*to Claudio*] Means your lordship to be married to-morrow?

Pedro. You know he does.

John I know not that, when he knows what I know. 95

Claud If there be any impediment, I pray you discover it.

John. You may think I love you not. Let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest. For my brother, I think he holds you well and in dearness of heart hath help to effect your ensuing marriage—surely suit ill spent and labour ill bestowed!

Pedro. Why, what's the matter? 104

John. I came hither to tell you, and, circumstances short'ned (for she has been too long a-talking of), the lady is disloyal.

Claud Who? Hero?

John Even she—Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero. 110

Claud. Disloyal?

John. The word is too good to paint out her wickedness. I could say she were worse; think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. Wonder not till further warrant. Go but with me to-night, you shall see her chamber window ent'red, even the

night before her wedding day. If you love her then, to-morrow wed her. But it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

Claud. May this be so? 120

Pedro. I will not think it.

John. If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know. If you will follow me, I will show you enough; and when you have seen more and heard more, proceed accordingly. 125

Claud. If I see anything to-night why I should not marry her to-morrow, in the congregation where I should wed, there will I shame her.

Pedro. And, as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her 130

John. I will disparage her no farther till you are my witnesses. Bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself.

Pedro. O day untowardly turned!

Claud. O mischief strangely thwarting! 135

John. O plague right well prevented!

So will you say when you have seen the sequel.

Exeunt.

[Scene III. *A street.*]

Enter *Dogberry* and his *companion* [*Verges*], with the *Watch*.

Dog. Are you good men and true?

Verg. Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

Dog. Nay, that were a punishment too good for them if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the Prince's watch. 6

Verg. Well, give them their charge, neighbour Dogberry

Dog. First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable? 10

1. *Watch.* Hugh Oatcake, sir, or George Seacoal; for they can write and read.

Dog. Come hither, neighbour Seacoal. God hath bless'd you with a good name. To be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune, but to write and read comes by nature. 16

2. *Watch.* Both which, Master Constable—

Dog. You have. I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favour, sir, why, give God thanks and make no boast of it, and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity. You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch. Therefore bear you the lanthorn. This is your charge: you shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the Prince's name. 27

2. *Watch.* How if 'a will not stand?

Dog. Why then, take no note of him, but let him go, and presently call the rest of the watch together and thank God you are rid of a knave

Verg. If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the Prince's subjects. 33

Dog. True, and they are to meddle with none but the Prince's subjects. You shall also make no noise in the streets; for for the watch to babble and to talk is most tolerable, and not to be endured.

2. *Watch.* We will rather sleep than talk. We know what belongs to a watch. 40

Dog. Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman, for I cannot see how sleeping should offend. Only have a care that your bills be not stol'n. Well, you are to call at all the alehouses and bid those that are drunk get them to bed. 46

2 *Watch*. How if they will not?

Dog. Why then, let them alone till they are sober. If they make you not then the better answer, you may say they are not the men you took them for. 51

2. *Watch*. Well, sir

Dog If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man, and for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty. 56

2 *Watch* If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

Dog. Truly, by your office you may; but I think they that touch pitch will be defil'd. The most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company. 63

Verg You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

Dog Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath any honesty in him

Verg. If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse and bid her still it 70

2. *Watch*. How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us?

Dog. Why then, depart in peace and let the child wake her with crying; for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes will never answer a calf when he bleats. 76

Verg 'Tis very true

Dog. This is the end of the charge: you, constable, are to present the Prince's own person. If you meet the Prince in the night, you may stay him 81

Verg. Nay, by'r lady, that I think 'a cannot.

Dog. Five shillings to one on't with any man that knows the statutes, he may stay him! Marry, not without the Prince be willing; for indeed the watch ought to offend no man, and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

Verig By'r lady, I think it be so 89

Dog Ha, ah, ha! Well, masters, good night. An there be any matter of weight chances, call up me. Keep your fellows' counsels and your own, and good night Come, neighbour.

2 *Watch*. Well, masters, we hear our charge Let us go sit here upon the church bench till two, and then all to bed. 96

Dog One word more, honest neighbours I pray you watch about Signior Leonato's door; for the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to-night. Adieu Be vigilant, I beseech you.
Exeunt [Dogberry and Verges].

Enter *Borachio* and *Conrade*.

Bora. What, *Conrade*! 102

2. *Watch*. [*aside*] Peace! stir not!

Bora. *Conrade*, I say!

Con Here, man I am at thy elbow 105

Bora Mass, and my elbow itch'd! I thought there would a scab follow.

Con I will owe thee an answer for that, and now forward with thy tale. 109

Bora. Stand thee close then under this penthouse, for it drizzles rain, and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

2. *Watch*. [*aside*] Some treason, masters Yet stand close.

Bora Therefore know I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats. 116

Con Is it possible that any villany should be so dear?

Bora. Thou shouldst rather ask if it were possible any villany should be so rich; for when rich villains have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will 122

Con. I wonder at it.

Bora. That shows thou art unconfirm'd. Thou knowest that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man.

Con. Yes, it is apparel 127

Bora I mean the fashion

Con Yes, the fashion is the fashion

Bora. Tush! I may as well say the fool's the fool. But seest thou not what a deformed thief this fashion is? 132

2. *Watch* [*aside*] I know that Deformed. 'A has been a vile thief this seven year; 'a goes up and down like a gentleman. I remember his name. 136

Bora. Didst thou not hear somebody?

Con. No; 'twas the vane on the house.

Bora. Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? how giddily 'a turns about all the hot-bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty? sometimes fashioning them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the reechy painting, sometime like god Bel's priests in the old church window, sometime like the shaven Hercules in the smirch'd worm-eaten tapestry, where his cod-piece seems as massy as his club? 147

Con. All this I see; and I see that the fashion wears out more apparel than the man. But art not thou thyself giddy with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion? 152

Bora. Not so neither But know that I have to-night woped Margaret, the Lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero. She leans me out at her mistress' chamber window, bids me a thousand times good night—I tell this tale vilely; I should first tell thee how the Prince, Claudio, and my master, planted and placed and possessed by my master Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter 161

Con. And thought they Margaret was Hero?

Bora. Two of them did, the Prince and Claudio; but the devil my master knew she was Margaret; and partly by his oaths, which first possess'd them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villany, which did confirm any slander that Don John had made, away went

Claudio enrag'd; swore he would meet her, as he was appointed, next morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw o'ernight and send her home again without a husband. 175

2. *Watch*. We charge you in the Prince's name stand!

1. *Watch*. Call up the right Master Constable. We have here recover'd the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth. 181

2. *Watch*. And one Deformed is one of them. I know him, 'a wears a lock.

Con. Masters, masters—

1. *Watch*. You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you. 186

Con. Masters—

2. *Watch*. Never speak, we charge you. Let us obey you to go with us.

Bora. We are like to prove a goodly commodity, being taken up of these men's bills. 191

Con. A commodity in question, I warrant you. Come, we'll obey you. *Exeunt*.

[Scene IV. *A room in Leonato's house.*]

Enter *Hero*, and *Margaret* and *Ursula*.

Hero. Good *Ursula*, wake my cousin Beatrice and desire her to rise.

Urs. I will, lady.

Hero. And bid her come hither.

Urs. Well.

[*Exit.*]

Marg. Troth, I think your other rebato were better. 6

Hero. No, pray thee, good Meg, I'll wear this.

Marg. By my troth, 's not so good, and I warrant your cousin will say so. 10

Hero. My cousin 's a fool, and thou art another. I'll wear none but this

Marg. I like the new tire within excellently, if the hair were a thought browner, and your gown 's a most rare fashion, I' faith I saw the Duchess of Milan's gown that they praise so

Hero. O, that exceeds, they say. * 17

Marg. By my troth, 's but a nightgown in respect of yours—cloth-o'-gold and cuts, and lac'd with silver, set with pearls down sleeves, side-sleeves, and skirts, round underborne with a bluish tinsel. But for a fine, quaint, graceful, and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

Hero. God give me joy to wear it! for my heart is exceeding heavy. 25

Marg. 'Twill be heavier soon by the weight of a man.

Hero. Fie upon thee! art not ashamed?

Marg. Of what, lady? of speaking honourably? Is not marriage honourable in a beggar? Is not your lord honourable without marriage? I think you would have me say, 'saving your reverence, a husband.' An bad thinking do not wrest true speaking, I'll offend nobody. Is there any harm in 'the heavier for a husband'? None, I think, an it be the right husband and the right wife. Otherwise 'tis light, and not heavy. Ask my Lady Beatrice else. Here she comes.

Enter Beatrice.

Hero. Good morrow, coz.

Beat. Good morrow, sweet Hero 40

Hero. Why, how now? Do you speak in the sick tune?

Beat. I am out of all other tune, methinks.

Marg. Clap's into 'Light o' love.' That goes without a burden. Do you sing it, and I'll dance it. 43

Beat. Yea, 'Light o' love' with your heels! then, if your husband have stables enough, you'll see he shall lack no barnes

Marg. O illegitimate construction! I scorn that with my heels 51

Beat. 'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin; 'tis time you were ready. By my troth, I am exceeding ill. Hey-ho!

Marg. For a hawk, a horse, or a husband? 55

Beat. For the letter that begins them all, H

Marg. Well, an you be not turn'd Turk, there's no more sailing by the star.

Beat. What means the fool, trow?

Marg. Nothing I; but God send every one their heart's desire! 61

Hero. These gloves the Count sent me, they are an excellent perfume.

Beat. I am stuff'd, cousin; I cannot smell.

Marg. A maid, and stuff'd! There's goodly catching of cold.

Beat. O, God help me! God help me! How long have you profess'd apprehension?

Marg. Ever since you left it. Doth not my wit become me rarely? 70

Beat. It is not seen enough. You should wear it in your cap. By my troth, I am sick.

Marg. Get you some of this distill'd carduus benedictus and lay it to your heart. It is the only thing for a qualm. 75

Hero. There thou prick'st her with a thistle.

Beat. Benedictus? why benedictus? You have some moral in this 'benedictus.'

Marg. Moral? No, by my troth, I have no moral meaning, I meant plain holy thistle. You may think perchance that I think you are in love. Nay, by'r lady, I am not such a fool to think what I list; nor I list not to think what I can; nor indeed I cannot think, if I would think my heart out of thinking, that

you are in love, or that you will be in love, or that you can be in love. Yet Benedick was such another, and now is he become a man. He swore he would never marry; and yet now in despite of his heart he eats his meat without grudging; and how you may be converted I know not, but methinks you look with your eyes as other women do. 92

Beat. What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

Marg. Not a false gallop.

Enter Ursula.

Urs. Madam, withdraw. The Prince, the Count, Signior Benedick, Don John, and all the gallants of the town are come to fetch you to church. 97

Hero. Help to dress me, good coz, good Meg, good Ursula.
[*Exeunt.*]

[Scene V. *The hall in Leonato's house.*]

*Enter Leonato and the Constable [Dogberry]
and the Headborough [Verges].*

Leon. What would you with me, honest neighbour?

Dog. Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you that decerns you nearly

Leon. Brief, I pray you; for you see it is a busy time with me.

Dog. Marry, this it is, sir. 7

Verg. Yes, in truth it is, sir.

Leon. What is it, my good friends?

Dog. Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter—an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt as, God help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, honest as the skin between his brows. 14

Verg. Yes, I thank God I am as honest as any man living that is an old man and no honestier than I

Dog. Comparisons are odorous Palabras, neighbour Verges

Leon. Neighbours, you are tedious 20

Dog. It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor Duke's officers, but truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship 25

Leon. All thy tediousness on me, ah?

Dog. Yea, an 'twere a thousand pound more than 'tis; for I hear as good exclamation on your worship as of any man in the city, and though I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.

Verg. And so am I. 31

Leon. I would fain know what you have to say.

Verg. Marry, sir, our watch to-night, excepting your worship's presence, ha' ta'en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in Messina. 35

Dog. A good old man, sir; he will be talking. As they say, 'When the age is in, the wit is out.' God help us! it is a world to see! Well said, i' faith, neighbour Verges. Well, God's a good man. An two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind. An honest soul, i' faith, sir, by my troth he is, as ever broke bread; but God is to be worshipp'd, all men are not alike, alas, good neighbour!

Leon. Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you. 45

Dog. Gifts that God gives.

Leon. I must leave you.

Dog. One word, sir. Our watch, sir, have indeed comprehended two aspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your worship. 52

Leon. Take their examination yourself and bring it me. I am now in great haste, as it may appear unto you 55

Dog. It shall be suffigance.

Leon. Drink some wine ere you go. Fare you well.

[Enter a *Messenger*]

Mess. My lord, they stay for you to give your daughter to her husband. 60

Leon. I'll wait upon them. I am ready.

[*Exeunt Leonato and Messenger*]

Dog. Go, good partner, go get you to Francis Seacoal, bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the jail. We are now to examination these men.

Verg. And we must do it wisely. 65

Dog. We will spare for no wit, I warrant you. Here's that shall drive some of them to a non-come. Only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication, and meet me at the jail.

Exeunt.

Enter *Don Pedro*, [*John the*] *Bastard*, *Leonato*, *Friar* [*Francis*],
Claudio, *Benedick*, *Hero*, *Beatrice*, [and *Attendants*].

Leon. Come, *Friar Francis*, be brief. Only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

Friar. You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady? 5

Claud. No.

Leon. To be married to her. *Friar*, you come to marry her.

Friar. Lady, you come hither to be married to this count? 10

Hero. I do.

Friar. If either of you know any inward impediment why you should not be conjoined, I charge you on your souls to utter it.

Claud. Know you any, *Hero*? 15

Hero. None, my lord.

Friar. Know you any, *Count*?

Leon. I dare make his answer—none.

Claud. O, what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do, not knowing what they do! 21

Bene. How now? interjections? Why then, some be of laughing, as, ah, ha, he!

Claud. Stand thee by, *friar*. Father, by your leave:
Will you with free and unconstrained soul 25
Give me this maid your daughter?

Leon. As freely, son, as God did give her me.

Claud. And what have I to give you back whose worth
May counterpoise this rich and precious gift?

Pedro. Nothing, unless you render her again. 30

Claud. Sweet Prince, you learn me noble thankfulness.
There, *Leonato*, take her back again
Give not this rotten orange to your friend.

She's but the sign and semblance of her honour.
Behold how like a maid she blushes here! 35

O, what authority and show of truth
Can cunning sin cover itself withal!
Comes not that blood as modest evidence
To witness simple virtue? Would you not swear,
All you that see her, that she were a maid 40
By these exterior shows? But she is none.
She knows the heat of a luxurious bed,
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

Leon. What do you mean, my lord?

Claud. Not to be married,
Not to knit my soul to an approved wanton. 45

Leon. Dear my lord, if you, in your own proof,
Have vanquish'd the resistance of her youth
And made defeat of her virginity—

Claud. I know what you would say If I have known her,
You will say she did embrace me as a husband, 50
And so extenuate the forehead sin.

No, Leonato,
I never tempted her with word too large,
But, as a brother to his sister, show'd
Bashful sincerity and comely love. 55

Hero. And seem'd I ever otherwise to you?

Claud. Out on the seeming! I will write against it.
You seem to me as Dian in her orb,
As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown;
But you are more intemperate in your blood 60
Than Venus, or those pamp'ring animals
That rage in savage sensuality.

Hero. Is my lord well that he doth speak so wide?

Leon. Sweet Prince, why speak not you?

Pedro. What should I speak?

I stand dishonour'd that have gone about 65

To link my dear friend to a common stale

Leon. Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?

John Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.

Bene This looks not like a nuptial.

Hero 'True!' O God!

Claud Leonato, stand I here? 70

Is this the Prince? Is this the Prince's brother?

Is this face Hero's? Are our eyes our own?

Leon All this is so, but what of this, my lord?

Claud Let me but move one question to your daughter,
And by that fatherly and kindly power 75

That you have in her, bid her answer truly

Leon I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.

Hero O, God defend me! How am I beset!

What kind of catechising call you this?

Claud. To make you answer truly to your name 80

Hero Is it not Hero? Who can blot that name

With any just reproach?

Claud. Marry, that can Hero!

Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue.

What man was he talk'd with you yesternight,

Out at your window betwixt twelve and one? 85

Now, if you are a maid, answer to this.

Hero. I talk'd with no man at that hour, my lord.

Pedro. Why, then are you no maiden. Leonato,

I am sorry you must hear. Upon my honour,
Myself, my brother, and this griev'd Count 90

Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night

Talk with a ruffian at her chamber window,

Who hath indeed, most like a liberal villain,

Confess'd the vile encounters they have had

A thousand times in secret. 95

John. Fie, fie! they are not to be nam'd, my lord—
Not to be spoke of,
There is not chastity enough in language
Without offence to utter them. Thus, pretty lady,
I am sorry for thy much misgovernment 100

Claud. O Hero! what a Hero hadst thou been
If half thy outward graces had been plac'd
About thy thoughts and counsels of thy heart!
But fare thee well, most foul, most fair! Farewell,
Thou pure impiety and impious purity! 105
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love,
And on my eyelids shall conjecture hang,
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,
And never shall it more be gracious

Leon. Hath no man's dagger here a point for me? 110
[*Hero swoons.*]

Beat. Why, how now, cousin? Wherefore sink you down?

John. Come let us go. These things, come thus to light,
Smother her spirits up.

[*Exeunt Don Pedro, Don Juan, and Claudio*]

Bene. How doth the lady?

Beat. Dead, I think. Help, uncle!
Hero! why, Hero! Uncle! Signior Benedick! Friar! 115

Leon. O Fate, take not away thy heavy hand!
Death is the fairest cover for her shame
That may be wish'd for.

Beat. How now, cousin Hero?

Friar. Have comfort, lady.

Leon. Dost thou look up?

Friar. Yea, wherefore should she not?

Leon. Wherefore? Why, doth not every earthly thing 121
Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny
The story that is printed in her blood?

Do not live, Hero, do not ope thine eyes;
For, did I think thou wouldst not quickly die, 125
Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames,
Myself would on the rearward of reproaches
Strike at thy life. Griev'd I, I had but one?
Child I for that at frugal nature's frame?
O, one too much by thee! Why had I one? 130
Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes?
Why had I not with charitable hand
Took up a beggar's issue at my gates,
Who smirched thus and mir'd with infamy,
I might have said, 'No part of it is mine, 135
This shame derives itself from unknown loins'?
But mine, and mine I lov'd, and mine I prais'd,
And mine that I was proud on—mine so much
That I myself was to myself not mine,
Valuing of her—why, she, O, she is fall'n 140
Into a pit of ink, that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her clean again,
And salt too little which may season give
To her foul tainted flesh!

Bene. Sir, sir, be patient.

For my part, I am so attir'd in wonder, 145
I know not what to say.

Beat. O, on my soul, my cousin is belied!

Bene. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

Beat. No, truly, not; although, until last night,
I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow. 150

Leon. Confirm'd, confirm'd! O, that is stronger made
Which was before barr'd up with ribs of iron!
Would the two princes lie? and Claudio lie,
Who lov'd her so that, speaking of her foulness,
Wash'd it with tears? Hence from her! let her die. 155

Friar. Hear me a little;
For I have only been silent so long,
And given way unto this course of fortune,
By noting of the lady. I have mark'd
A thousand blushing apparitions 160
To start into her face, a thousand innocent shames
In angel whiteness beat away those blushes,
And in her eye there hath appear'd a fire
To burn the errors that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth. Call me a fool; 165
Trust not my reading nor my observation,
Which with experimental seal doth warrant
The tenure of my book; trust not my age,
My reverence, calling, nor divinity,
If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here 170
Under some biting error.

Leon. Friar, it cannot be.
Thou seest that all the grace that she hath left
Is that she will not add to her damnation
A sin of perjury: she not denies it.
Why seek'st thou then to cover with excuse 175
That which appears in proper nakedness?

Friar. Lady, what man is he you are accus'd of?

Hero. They know that do accuse me; I know none.
If I know more of any man alive
Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant, 180
Let all my sins lack mercy! O my father,
Prove you that any man with me convers'd
At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight
Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death! 185

Friar. There is some strange misprision in the princes

Bene. Two of them have the very bent of honour;

And if their wisdoms be misled in this,
The practice of it lives in John the bastard,
Whose spirits toil in frame of villanies. 190

Leon. I know not If they speak but truth of her,
These hands shall tear her If they wrong her honour,
The proudest of them shall well hear of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,
Nor age so eat up my invention, 195
Nor fortune made such havoc of my means,
Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,
But they shall find awak'd in such a kind
Both strength of limb and policy of mind,
Ability in means, and choice of friends, 200
To quit me of them throughly.

Friar Pause awhile
And let my counsel sway you in this case.
Your daughter here the princes left for dead,
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it that she is dead indeed; 205
Maintain a mourning ostentation,
And on your family's old monument
Hang mournful epitaphs, and do all rites
That appertain unto a burial.

Leon. What shall become of this? What will this do? 210

Friar. Marry, this well carried shall on her behalf
Change slander to remorse. That is some good.
But not for that dream I on this strange course,
But on this travail look for greater birth.
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd, 215
Upon the instant that she was accus'd,
Shall be lamented, pitied, and excus'd
Of every hearer; for it so falls out
That what we have we prize not to the worth

Whiles we enjoy it, but being lack'd and lost, 220
Why, then we rack the value, then we find
The virtue that possession would not show us
Whiles it was ours. So will it fare with Claudio.
When he shall hear she died upon his words,
Th' idea of her life shall sweetly creep 225
Into his study of imagination,
And every lovely organ of her life
Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit,
More moving, delicate, and full of life,
Into the eye and prospect of his soul 230
Than when she liv'd indeed Then shall he mourn
(If ever love had interest in his liver)
And wish he had not so accused her—
No, though he thought his accusation true.
Let this be so, and doubt not but success 235
Will fashion the event in better shape
Than I can lay it down in likelihood.
But if all aim but this be levell'd false,
The supposition of the lady's death
Will quench the wonder of her infamy. 240
And if it sort not well, you may conceal her,
As best befits her wounded reputation,
In some reclusive and religious life,
Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.
 Bene. Signior Leonato, let the friar advise you; 245
And though you know my inwardness and love
Is very much unto the Prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honour, I will deal in this
As secretly and justly as your soul
Should with your body.
 Leon. Being that I flow in grief, 250
The smallest twine may lead me.

Friar. 'Tis well consented. Presently away,
For to strange sores strangely they strain the cure.
Come, lady, die to live. This wedding day
Perhaps is but prolong'd. Have patience and endure. 255

Exeunt [all but Benedick and Beatrice].

Bene. Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?

Beat. Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

Bene. I will not desire that.

Beat. You have no reason. I do it freely. 260

Bene. Surely I do believe your fair cousin is wronged.

Beat. Ah, how much might the man deserve of me that
would right her!

Bene. Is there any way to show such friendship? 265

Beat. A very even way, but no such friend.

Bene. May a man do it?

Beat. It is a man's office, but not yours.

Bene. I do love nothing in the world so well as you. Is not
that strange? 270

Beat. As strange as the thing I know not. It were as possible
for me to say I loved nothing so well as you. But believe me
not; and yet I lie not. I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing.
I am sorry for my cousin. 275

Bene. By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me.

Beat. Do not swear, and eat it

Bene. I will swear by it that you love me, and I will make
him eat it that says I love not you.

Beat. Will you not eat your word? 280

Bene. With no sauce that can be devised to it. I protest I
love thee.

Beat. Why then, God forgive me!

Bene. What offence, sweet Beatrice?

Beat. You have stayed me in a happy hour. I was about to
protest I loved you. 286

Bene. And do it with all thy heart.

Beat I love you with so much of my heart that none is left to protest

Bene. Come, bid me do anything for thee. 290

Beat. Kill Claudio.

Bene Ha! not for the wide world!

Beat. You kill me to deny it. Farewell.

Bene Tarry, sweet Beatrice.

Beat I am gone, though I am here There is no love in you
Nay, I pray you let me go 296

Bene. Beatrice—

Beat In faith, I will go

Bene. We'll be friends first.

Beat. You dare easier be friends with me than fight with mine enemy. 301

Bene. Is Claudio thine enemy?

Beat. Is 'a not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman? O that I were a man! What? bear her in hand until they come to take hands, and then with public accusation, uncover'd slander, unmitigated rancour—O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market place.

Bene Hear me, Beatrice! 310

Beat. Talk with a man out at a window!—a proper saying!

Bene. Nay, but Beatrice—

Beat Sweet Hero! she is wrong'd, she is sland'ed, she is undone. 315

Bene. Beat—

Beat. Princes and Counties! Surely a princely testimony, a goodly count, Count Comfect, a sweet gallant surely! O that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any friend would be 'a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into cursies, valour into compliment, and men are only turn'd into tongue, and

trim ones too. He is now as valiant as Hercules that only tells a lie, and swears it I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving. 326

Bene. Tarry, good Beatrice. By this hand, I love thee.

Beat. Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it

Bene. Think you in your soul the Count Claudio hath wrong'd Hero?

Beat. Yea, as sure as I have a thought or a soul. 333

Bene. Enough, I am engag'd, I will challenge him. I will kiss your hand, and so I leave you. By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account. As you hear of me, so think of me. Go comfort your cousin. I must say she is dead—and so farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

[Scene II. *A prison.*]

Enter the *Constables* [*Dogberry* and *Verges*] and the *Sexton*, in gowns, [and the *Watch*, with *Conrade* and] *Borachio*.

Dog. Is our whole dissembly appear'd?

Verg. O, a stool and a cushion for the sexton.

Sex. Which be the malefactors?

Dog. Marry, that am I and my partner.

Verg. Nay, that's certain. We have the exhibition to examine. 6

Sex. But which are the offenders that are to be examined? let them come before Master Constable.

Dog. Yea, marry, let them come before me. What is your name, friend? 11

Bora. Borachio.

Dog. Pray write down Borachio. Yours, sirrah?

Con. I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is Conrade. 16

Dog. Write down Master Gentleman Conrade. Masters, do you serve God?

Both Yea, sir, we hope.

Dog. Write down that they hope they serve God; and write God first, for God defend but God should go before such villains! Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves, and it will go near to be thought so shortly How answer you for yourselves? 25

Con. Marry, sir, we say we are none

Dog. A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you, but I will go about with him. Come you hither, sirrah. A word in your ear. Sir, I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves 30

Bora. Sir, I say to you we are none

Dog. Well, stand aside. Fore God, they are both in a tale Have you writ down that they are none? 34

Sex. Master Constable, you go not the way to examine. You must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

Dog. Yea, marry, that's the eetest way. Let the watch come forth. Masters, I charge you in the Prince's name accuse these men. 40

1. Watch. This man said, sir, that Don John the Prince's brother was a villain.

Dog. Write down Prince John a villain. Why, this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother villain.

Bora. Master Constable— 45

Dog. Pray thee, fellow, peace. I do not like thy look, I promise thee

Sex. What heard you him say else?

2. Watch. Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John for accusing the Lady Hero wrongfully. 51

Dog. Flat burglary as ever was committed.

Verg. Yea, by th' mass, that it is.

Sex. What else, fellow?

I Watch And that Count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

Dog. O villain! thou wilt be condemn'd into everlasting redemption for this.

Sex What else?

60

Watchmen This is all.

Sex And this is more, masters, than you can deny Prince John is this morning secretly stol'n away. Hero was in this manner accus'd, in this very manner refus'd, and upon the grief of this suddenly died. Master Constable, let these men be bound and brought to Leonato's. I will go before and show him their examination

[*Exit.*]

Dog Come, let them be opinion'd.

Verg. Let them be in the hands—

70

Con. Off, coxcomb!

Dog God's my life, where's the sexton? Let him write down the Prince's officer coxcomb. Come, bind them.—Thou naughty varlet!

Con Away! you are an ass, you are an ass

75

Dog Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years? O that he were here to write me down an ass! But, masters, remember that I am an ass. Though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass. No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be prov'd upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow; and which is more, an officer, and which is more, a householder; and which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina, and one that knows the law, go to! and a rich fellow enough, go to! and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns and everything handsome about him. Bring him away. O that I had been writ down an ass!

Exeunt.

ACT V. [Scene I. *The street, near Leonato's house*]

Enter *Leonato* and his brother [*Antonio*]

Ant. If you go on thus, you will kill yourself,
And 'tis not wisdom thus to second grief
Against yourself.

Leon. I pray thee cease thy counsel,
Which falls into mine ears as profitless
As water in a sieve. Give not me counsel, 5
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine.
Bring me a father that so lov'd his child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak to me of patience. 10
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it answer every strain for strain,
As thus for thus, and such a grief for such,
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form.
If such a one will smile and stroke his beard, 15
Bid sorrow wag, cry 'hem' when he should groan,
Patch grief with proverbs, make misfortune drunk
With candle-wasters—bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather patience.
But there is no such man; for, brother, men 20
Can counsel and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but, tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion, which before
Would give preceptual medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madness in a silken thread, 25
• Charm ache with air and agony with words.
No, no! 'Tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow,

But no man's virtue nor sufficiency
To be so moral when he shall endure 30
The like himself Therefore give me no counsel.
My griefs cry louder than advertisement

Ant. Therein do men from children nothing differ.

Leon. I pray thee peace. I will be flesh and blood,
For there was never yet philosopher 35
That could endure the toothache patiently,
However they have writ the style of gods
And made a push at chance and sufferance.

Ant. Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself.
Make those that do offend you suffer too. 40

Leon. There thou speak'st reason. Nay, I will do so.
My soul doth tell me Hero is belied;
And that shall Claudio know, so shall the Prince,
And all of them that thus dishonour her.

Enter Don Pedro and Claudio.

Ant. Here comes the Prince and Claudio hastily. 45

Pedro. Good den, good den.

Claud. Good day to both of you.

Leon. Hear you, my lords!

Pedro. We have some haste, Leonato

Leon. Some haste, my lord! well, fare you well, my lord
Are you so hasty now? Well, all is one.

Pedro. Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old man. 50

Ant. If he could right himself with quarrelling,
Some of us would lie low

Claud. Who wrongs him?

Leon. Marry, thou dost wrong me, thou dissembler, thou!
Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword;
I fear thee not.

Claud. Marry, beshrew my hand 55

If it should give your age such cause of fear.

In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.

Leon. Tush, tush, man! never fleer and jest at me.

I speak not like a dotard nor a fool,

As under privilege of age to brag 60

What I have done being young, or what would do,

Were I not old. Know, Claudio, to thy head,

Thou hast so wrong'd mine innocent child and me

That I am forc'd to lay my reverence by

And, with grey hairs and bruise of many days, 65

Do challenge thee to trial of a man.

I say thou hast belied mine innocent child;

Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,

And she lies buried with her ancestors—

O, in a tomb where never scandal slept, 70

Save this of hers, fram'd by thy villany!

Claud. My villany?

Leon. Thine, Claudio; thine I say.

Pedro. You say not right, old man.

Leon. My lord, my lord,

I'll prove it on his body if he dare,

Despite his nice fence and his active practice, 75

His May of youth and bloom of lustihood.

Claud. Away! I will not have to do with you.

Leon. Canst thou so daff me? Thou hast kill'd my child.

If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.

Ant. He shall kill two of us, and men indeed. 80

But that's no matter, let him kill one first.

Win me and wear me! Let him answer me.

Come, follow me, boy. Come, sir boy, come follow me.

Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence!

Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will. 85

Leon. Brother—

Ant. Content yourself God knows I lov'd my niece,
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villains,
That dare as well answer a man indeed
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue. 90
Boys, apes, braggarts, Jacks, milksops!

Leon. Brother Anthony—

Ant. Hold you content What, man! I know them, yea,
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple,
Scambling, outfacing, fashion-monging boys,
That lie and cog and flout, deprave and slander, 95
Go anticly, show outward hideousness,
And speak off half a dozen dang'rous words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst;
And this is all.

Leon. But, brother Anthony—

Ant. Come, 'tis no matter. 100
Do not you meddle; let me deal in this.

Pedro. Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience.
My heart is sorry for your daughter's death;
But, on my honour, she was charg'd with nothing
But what was true, and very full of proof. 105

Leon. My lord, my lord—

Pedro. I will not hear you.

Leon. No? Come, brother, away!—I will be heard.

Ant. And shall, or some of us will smart for it.

Exeunt ambo.

Enter Benedick.

Pedro. See, see! Here comes the man we went to seek. 110

Claud. Now, signior, what news?

Bene. Good day, my lord.

Pedro. Welcome, signior. You are almost come to part al-
most a fray. 114

Claud. We had lik'd to have had our two noses snapp'd off with two old men without teeth.

Pedro Leonato and his brother. What think'st thou? Had we fought, I doubt we should have been too young for them.

Bene In a false quarrel there is no true valour I came to seek you both 121

Claud. We have been up and down to seek thee; for we are high-proof melancholy, and would fain have it beaten away. Wilt thou use thy wit?

Bene It is in my scabbard. Shall I draw it? 125

Pedro. Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side?

Claud. Never any did so, though very many have been beside their wit. I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels—draw to pleasure us.

Pedro. As I am an honest man, he looks pale. Art thou sick or angry? 131

Claud. What, courage, man! What though care kill'd a cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

Bene. Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career an you charge it against me. I pray you choose another subject. 137

Claud. Nay then, give him another staff; this last was broke cross.

Pedro. By this light, he changes more and more. I think he be angry indeed. 141

Claud. If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle.

Bene Shall I speak a word in your ear?

Claud. God bless me from a challenge! 145

Bene. [*aside to Claudio*] You are a villain. I jest not, I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare. Do me right, or I will protest your cowardice. You have kill'd a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you. Let me hear from you. 151

Claud. Well, I will meet you, so I may have good cheer.

Pedro. What, a feast? a teast?

Claud. I' faith, I thank him, he hath bid me to a calve's head and a capon, the which if I do not carve most curiously, say my knite's naught. Shall I not find a woodcock too?

Bene. Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily. 159

Pedro. I'll tell thee how Beatrice prais'd thy wit the other day. I said thou hadst a fine wit 'True,' said she, 'a fine little one.' 'No,' said I, 'a great wit' 'Right,' says she, 'a great gross one.' 'Nay,' said I, 'a good wit' 'Just,' said she, 'it hurts nobody' 'Nay,' said I, 'the gentleman is wise.' 'Certain,' said she, 'a wise gentleman.' 'Nay,' said I, 'he hath the tongues.' 'That I believe,' said she, 'for he swore a thing to me on Monday night which he forswore on Tuesday morning. There's a double tongue; there's two tongues' Thus did she an hour together transshape thy particular virtues. Yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the proper'st man in Italy. 174

Claud. For the which she wept heartily and said she cared not.

Pedro. Yea, that she did; but yet, for all that, an if she did not hate him deadly, she would love him dearly. The old man's daughter told us all. 180

Claud. All, all! and moreover, God saw him when he was hid in the garden.

Pedro. But when shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible Benedick's head?

Claud. Yea, and text underneath, 'Here dwells Benedick, the married man?' 186

Bene. Fare you well, boy; you know my mind. I will leave you now to your gossiplike humour. You break jests as braggards do their blades, which God be thanked hurt not. My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you. I must discontinue your company. Your brother the bastard is fled from Messina. You have among you kill'd a sweet and innocent lady. For my

Lord Lackbeard there, he and I shall meet, and till then peace
be with him [Exit.]

Pedro. He is in earnest

Claud. In most profound earnest, and, I'll warrant you, for
the love of Beatrice

Pedro. And hath challeng'd thee. 200

Claud. Most sincerely.

Pedro. What a pretty thing man is when he goes in his
doublet and hose and leaves off his wit! 204

Enter *Constables* [*Dogberry* and *Verges*, with the
Watch, leading] *Conrade* and *Borachio*.

Claud. He is then a giant to an ape; but then is an ape a
doctor to such a man.

Pedro. But, soft you, let me be! Pluck up, my heart, and
be sad! Did he not say my brother was fled? 209

Dog. Come you, sir. If justice cannot tame you, she shall
ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance. Nay, an you be a curs-
ing hypocrite once, you must be look'd to.

Pedro. How now? two of my brother's men bound? *Borachio*
one. 215

Claud. Hearken after their offence, my lord.

Pedro. Officers, what offence have these men done?

Dog. Marry, sir, they have committed false report; moreover,
they have spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanders; sixth
and lastly, they have belied a lady; thirdly, they have verified
unjust things; and to conclude, they are lying knaves. 224

Pedro. First, I ask thee what they have done; thirdly, I ask
thee what's their offence; sixth and lastly, why they are com-
mitted; and to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

Claud. Rightly reasoned, and in his own division; and by
my troth there's one meaning well suited. 231

Pedro. Who have you offended, mastess, that you are thus

bound to your answer? This learned constable is too cunning to be understood. What's your offence? 235

Bora. Sweet Prince, let me go no farther to mine answer. Do you hear me, and let this Count kill me. I have deceived even your very eyes. What your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light, who in the night overheard me confessing to this man, how Don John your brother incensed me to slander the Lady Hero; how you were brought into the orchard and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garments; how you disgrac'd her when you should marry her. My villany they have upon record, which I had rather seal with my death than repeat over to my shame. The lady is dead upon mine and my master's false accusation; and briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain. 251

Pedro. Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

Claud. I have drunk poison whiles he utter'd it.

Pedro. But did my brother set thee on to this?

Bora. Yea, and paid me richly for the practice of it. 255

Pedro. He is compos'd and fram'd of treachery,
And fled he is upon this villany.

Claud. Sweet Hero, now thy image doth appear
In the rare semblance that I lov'd it first. 260

Dog. Come, bring away the plaintiffs. By this time our sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter. And, masters, do not forget to specify, when time and place shall serve, that I am an ass. 265

Verg. Here, here comes Master Signior Leonato, and the sexton too.

Enter *Leonato*, his brother [*Antonio*], and the *Sexton*.

Leon. Which is the villain? Let me see his eyes,
That, when I note another man like him,
I may avoid him. Which of these is he? 270

Bora. If you would know your wronger, look on me.

Leon. Art thou the slave that with thy breath hast kill'd
Mine innocent child?

Bora. Yea, even I alone.

Leon. No, not so, villain! thou beliest thyself.
Here stand a pair of honourable men— 275
A third is fled—that had a hand in it.
I thank you princes for my daughter's death.
Record it with your high and worthy deeds
'Twas bravely done, if you bethink you of it.

Claud. I know not how to pray your patience; 280
Yet I must speak. Choose your revenge yourself,
Impose me to what penance your invention
Can lay upon my sin Yet sinn'd I not
But in mistaking.

Pedro. By my soul, nor I!
And yet, to satisfy this good old man, 285
I would bend under any heavy weight
That he'll enjoin me to.

Leon. I cannot bid you bid my daughter live—
That were impossible; but I pray you both,
Possess the people in Messina here 290
How innocent she died; and if your love
Can labour aught in sad invention,
Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb,
And sing it to her bones—sing it to-night.
To-morrow morning come you to my house, 295
And since you could not be my son-in-law,
Be yet my nephew. My brother hath a daughter,
Almost the copy of my child that's dead,
And she alone is heir to both of us.
Give her the right you should have giv'n her cousin, 300
And so dies my revenge.

Claud. O noble sir!

Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me
I do embrace your offer; and dispose
For hencetorth of poor Claudio.

Leon. To-morrow then I will expect your coming; 305
To-night I take my leave. This naughty man
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who I believe was pack'd in all this wrong,
Hir'd to it by your brother.

Bora. No, by my soul, she was not;
Nor knew not what she did when she spoke to me; 310
But always hath been just and virtuous
In anything that I do know by her.

Dog. Moreover, sir, which indeed is not under white and
black, this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me ass. I be-
seech you let it be rememb'red in his punishment. And also the
watch heard them talk of one Deformed. They say he wears a
key in his ear, and a lock hanging by it, and borrows money in
God's name, the which he hath us'd so long and never paid that
now men grow hard-hearted and will lend nothing for God's
sake. Pray you examine him upon that point. 322

Leon. I thank thee for thy care and honest pains

Dog. Your worship speaks like a most thankful and reverent
youth, and I praise God for you.

Leon. There's for thy pains. [*Gives money.*] 326

Dog. God save the foundation!

Leon. Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thank thee.

Dog. I leave an arrant knave with your worship, which I be-
seech your worship to correct yourself, for the example of others.
God keep your worship! I wish your worship well. God re-
store you to health! I humbly give you leave to depart; and if
a merry meeting may be wish'd, God prohibit it! Come, neigh-
bour.

Exeunt [Dogberry and Verges].

Leon. Until to-morrow morning, lords, farewell

Ant. Farewell, my lords We look for you to-morrow.

Pedro. We will not fail.

Claud. To-night I'll mourn with Hero.

[*Exeunt Don Pedro and Claudio.*]

Leon. [*to the Watch*] Bring you these fellows on — We'll
talk with Margaret, 340

How her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow *Exeunt.*

[Scene II. Leonato's orchard]

Enter *Benedick* and *Margaret* [meeting].

Bene. Pray thee, sweet Mistress Margaret, deserve well at
my hands by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

Marg. Will you then write me a sonnet in praise of my
beauty? 5

Bene. In so high a style, Margaret, that no man living shall
come over it; for in most comely truth thou deservest it

Marg. To have no man come over me? Why, shall I always
keep below stairs? 10

Bene. Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth—it
catches.

Marg. And yours as blunt as the fencer's foils, which hit
but hurt not.

Bene. A most manly wit, Margaret: it will not hurt a woman.
And so I pray thee call Beatrice I give thee the bucklers.

Marg. Give us the swords, we have bucklers of our own. 19

Bene. If you use them, Margaret, you must put in the pikes
with a vice, and they are dangerous weapons for maids.

Marg. Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who I think hath legs.

Bene. And therefore will come. 25

Exit Margaret.

[*Sings.*] The god of love,
That sits above
And knows me, and knows me,
How pitiful I deserve—

29

I mean in singing; but in loving Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first employer of panders, and a whole book full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet run smoothly in the even road of a blank verse—why, they were never so truly turn'd over and over as my poor self in love. Marry, I cannot show it in rhyme. I have tried. I can find out no rhyme to 'lady' but 'baby'—an innocent rhyme; for 'scorn,' 'horn'—a hard rhyme; for 'school,' 'fool'—a babbling rhyme. very ominous endings! No, I was not born under a rhyming planet, nor I cannot woo in festival terms.

41

Enter Beatrice.

Sweet Beatrice, wouldst thou come when I call'd thee?

Beat. Yea, signior, and depart when you bid me.

Bene. O, stay but till then!

45

Beat. 'Then' is spoken. Fare you well now. And yet, ere I go, let me go with that I came for, which is, with knowing what hath pass'd between you and Claudio.

Bene. Only foul words, and thereupon I will kiss thee.

50

Beat. Foul words is but foul wind, and foul wind is but foul breath, and foul breath is noisome. Therefore I will depart unkiss'd.

Bene. Thou hast frighted the word out of his right sense, so forcible is thy wit. But I must tell thee plainly, Claudio undergoes my challenge; and either I must shortly hear from him or I will subscribe him a coward. And I pray thee now tell me, for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

61

Beat. For them all together, which maintain'd so politic a

state of evil that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me? 66

Bene. Suffer love!—a good epithet. I do suffer love indeed, for I love thee against my will

Beat. In spite of your heart, I think Alas, poor heart! If you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours, for I will never love that which my friend hates 72

Bene. Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably

Beat. It appears not in this confession. There's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself. 77

Bene. An old, an old instance, Beatrice, that liv'd in the time of good neighbours. If a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument than the bell rings and the widow weeps 82

Beat. And how long is that, think you?

Bene. Question why, an hour in clamour and a quarter in rheum. Therefore is it most expedient for the wise, if Don Worm (his conscience) find no impediment to the contrary, to be the trumpet of his own virtues, as I am to myself. So much for praising myself, who, I myself will bear witness, is praiseworthy. And now tell me, how doth your cousin? 91

Beat. Very ill

Bene. And how do you?

Beat. Very ill too.

Bene. Serve God, love me, and mend. There will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste 96

Enter Ursula.

Urs. Madam, you must come to your uncle. Yonder's old coil at home. It is proved my Lady Hero hath been falsely accus'd, the Prince and Claudio mightily abus'd, and Don John

is the author of all, who is fled and gone. Will you come presently? 102

Beat. Will you go hear this news, signior?

Bene. I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes; and moreover, I will go with thee to thy uncle's

Exeunt

[Scene III. *A churchyard.*]

Enter *Claudio*, *Don Pedro*, and three or four with tapers,
[followed by *Musicians*]

Claud. Is this the monument of Leonato?

Lord. It is, my lord.

Claud [reads from a scroll]

Epitaph.

Done to death by slanderous tongues

Was the Hero that here lies

Death, in guerdon of her wrongs,

Gives her fame which never dies.

So the life that died with shame

Lives in death with glorious fame.

5

Hang thou there upon the tomb,

[*Hangs up the scroll.*]

Praising her when I am dumb.

10

Now, music, sound, and sing your solemn hymn.

Song.

Pardon, goddess of the night,

Those that slew thy virgin knight;

For the which, with songs of woe,

Round about her tomb they go.

15

Midnight, assist our moan,
Help us to sigh and groan
Heavily, heavily
Graves, yawn and yield your dead,
Till death be uttered
Heavily, heavily

20

Claud. Now unto thy bones good night!
Yearly will I do this rite.

Pedro. Good morrow, masters. Put your torches out.
The wolves have prey'd, and look, the gentle day,
Before the wheels of Phœbus, round about
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey.
Thanks to you all, and leave us. Fare you well.

25

Claud. Good morrow, masters. Each his several way.

Pedro. Come, let us hence and put on other weeds,
And then to Leonato's we will go.

30

Claud. And Hymen now with luckier issue speeds
Than this for whom we rend'red up this woe. *Exeunt,*

[Scene IV. *The hall in Leonato's house.*]

Enter *Leonato*, *Benedick*, [*Beatrice*,] *Margaret*,
Ursula, *Antonio*, *Friar* [*Francis*], *Hero*.

Friar. Did I not tell you she was innocent?

Leon. So are the Prince and Claudio, who accus'd her
Upon the error that you heard debated.
But Margaret was in some fault for this,
Although against her will, as it appears
In the true course of all the question.

5

Ani. Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.

Bene. And so am I, being else by faith enforc'd
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

Leon. Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all, 10
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves,
And when I send for you, come hither mask'd.

Exeunt Ladies.

The Prince and Claudio promis'd by this hour
To visit me. You know your office, brother.
You must be father to your brother's daughter, 15
And give her to young Claudio

Ant. Which I will do with confirm'd countenance.

Bene. Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think.

Friar. To do what, signior?

Bene. To bind me, or undo me—one of them. 20

Signior Leonato, truth it is, good signior,
Your niece regards me with an eye of favour.

Leon. That eye my daughter lent her 'Tis most true.

Bene. And I do with an eye of love requite her.

Leon. The sight whereof I think you had from me, 25
From Claudio, and the Prince; but what's your will?

Bene. Your answer, sir, is enigmatical;

But, for my will, my will is, your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoin'd
In the state of honourable marriage; 30
In which, good friar, I shall desire your help.

Leon. My heart is with your liking.

Friar. And my help.

Enter Don Pedro and Claudio and two or three other.

Here comes the Prince and Claudio.

Pedro. Good morrow to this fair assembly.

Leon. Good morrow, Prince; good morrow, Claudio. 35
We here attend you. Are you yet determin'd
To-day to marry with my brother's daughter?

Claud. I'll hold my mind, were she an Ethiop.

Leon. Call her forth, brother Here's the friar ready.

[*Exit Antonio.*]

Pedro Good morrow, Benedick. Why, what's the matter 40
That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storm, and cloudiness?

Claud I think he thinks upon the savage bull.
Tush, fear not, man! We'll tip thy horns with gold,
And all Europa shall rejoice at thee, 45
As once Europa did at lusty Jove
When he would play the noble beast in love.

Bene. Bull Jove, sir, had an amiable low,
And some such strange bull leap'd your father's cow
And got a calf in that same noble feat 50
Much like to you, for you have just his bleat.

Enter [*Leonato's*] brother [*Antonio*], *Hero*, *Beatrice*,
Margaret, *Ursula*, [the ladies wearing masks].

Claud. For this I owe you. Here comes other reck'nings.
Which is the lady I must seize upon?

Ant This same is she, and I do give you her.

Claud. Why then, she's mine Sweet, let me see your face. 55

Leon No, that you shall not till you take her hand
Before this friar and swear to marry her.

Claud. Give me your hand before this holy friar.
I am your husband if you like of me

Hero. And when I liv'd I was your other wife; [*Unmask's.*]
And when you lov'd you were my other husband. 61

Claud. Another Hero!

Hero. Nothing certainer.

One Hero died defil'd; but I do live,
And surely as I live, I am a maid.

Pedro. The former Hero! Hero that is dead! 65

Leon. She died, my lord, but whiles her slander liv'd.

Friar. All this amazement can I qualify,
When, after that the holy rites are ended,
I'll tell you largely of fair Hero's death.
Meantime let wonder seem familiar, 70
And to the chapel let us presently.

Bene. Soft and fair, friar Which is Beatrice?

Beat. [*unmasks*] I answer to that name. What is your will?

Bene. Do not you love me?

Beat. Why, no; no more than reason.

Bene. Why, then your uncle, and the Prince, and Claudio 75
Have been deceived, for they swore you did.

Beat. Do not you love me?

Bene. Troth, no, no more than reason.

Beat. Why, then my cousin, Margaret, and Ursula
Are much deceiv'd, for they did swear you did.

Bene. They swore that you were almost sick for me 80

Beat. They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

Bene. 'Tis no such matter. Then you do not love me?

Beat. No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

Leon. Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

Claud. And I'll be sworn upon't that he loves her, 85
For here's a paper written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashion'd to Beatrice.

Hero. And here's another,
Writ in my cousin's hand, stol'n from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick 90

Bene. A miracle! Here's our own hands against our hearts.
Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity.

Beat. I would not deny you; but, by this good day, I yield
upon great persuasion, and partly to save your life, for I was
told you were in a consumption. 97

Bene. Peace! I will stop your mouth [*Kisses her.*]

Pedro. How dost thou, Benedick, the married man? 99

Bene. I'll tell thee what, Prince a college of wit-crackers cannot flout me out of my humour Dost thou think I care for a satire or an epigram? No. If a man will be beaten with brains, 'a shall wear nothing handsome about him In brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it, and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it, for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion. For thy part, Claudio, I did think to have beaten thee; but in that thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruised, and love my cousin. 113

Claud. I had well hop'd thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have cudgell'd thee out of thy single life, to make thee a double-dealer, which out of question thou wilt be if my cousin do not look exceeding narrowly to thee.

Bene Come, come, we are friends. Let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts and our wives' heels. 121

Leon. We'll have dancing afterward.

Bene. First, of my word! Therefore play, music. Prince, thou art sad. Get thee a wife, get thee a wife! There is no staff more reverent than one tipp'd with horn. 126

Enter Messenger.

Mess. My lord, your brother John is ta'en in flight,
And brought with armed men back to Messina.

Bene Think not on him till to-morrow. I'll devise thee brave punishments for him. Strike up, pipers! *Dance.* [*Exeunt.*]

NOTES

ACT I. Scene I

5 **this action:** this recent battle. Against whom Don Pedro has been conducting a campaign we are not informed, since the question is of no importance in the play. Some think the reference is to Don John's having 'stood out against his brother' (1, 3, 21, 22), but 'these wars' (1. 50) makes against that hypothesis. At all events, Claudio 'had all the glory' of Don John's 'overthrow' (1, 3, 68, 69). Thought is free!

6. **sort:** rank (cf. 1. 33).—**name:** high reputation.

18. **will:** that will. The ellipsis of a relative pronoun in the nominative is still common in rapid speech.

22, 23. **joy could not . . . without a badge of bitterness:** joy could not show itself with becoming moderation unless it wore the sign of sorrow; or, in plain language, unless he had burst into tears, his joy would have been beyond control.—**modest:** moderate. That tears, though often the result of joy, are the appropriate marks of sorrow, is an idea that Shakespeare repeats again and again with much variety of expression. Cf. *Macbeth*, i, 4, 33-35.

My plentiful joys,
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow.

26. **kind:** natural.

30. **Signior Mountanto.** *Montanto* or *montant* was a technical term for an upright blow or thrust in fencing.

37-45. **He set up his bills:** He posted his written notices—of the challenge to Cupid—**challeng'd Cupid at the flight:** challenged Cupid to a contest in which he would defy Cupid's arrows—**at the flight:** to an archery duel.—**subscrib'd for Cupid:** signed as Cupid's representative or substitute.—**at the burbolt:** for a contest with flat-headed arrows, such as were used to shoot birds. *Burbolt* is *bird-bolt*. Cf. John Cook, *Green's Tu Quoquo* (Collier's Dodsley, VII, 23). 'Now the

boy with the birdbolt [i.e., Cupid] be praised!"—to eat all of his killing. A proverbial turn of phrase, indicating that none would be killed. Steevens compares *Henry V*, iii, 7, 99, 100: 'Rambures. He longs to eat the English. Constable I think he will eat all he kills.'

46, 47. **tax:** take to task, censure.—**be meet with you:** make you an appropriate answer; be a match for your gibes.

51, 52. **help:** helped.—**trencherman:** eater. A *trencher* is a wooden plate or platter.—**stomach:** appetite.

54. **to:** in comparison with; in a contest with

59, 60 a **stuff'd man:** a mere figure of a man—clothes stuffed to resemble a living being.—**but for the stuffing . . . mortal:** but, as to what he's actually made of (what qualities of mind and character he is, as you call it 'stuffed with')—well, perhaps he's no worse than the general run of us poor human creatures.

66-72. **his five wits.** In Stephen Hawes, *The Pastime of Pleasure*, cap. 24, the five wits (mental faculties) are enumerated: common wit, imagination, fantasy, estimation, and memory. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, iv, 2, 92, 93; *King Lear*, iii, 4, 59; iii, 6, 60; *Sonnet* 141.—**halting:** limping.—**with:** by—**wit enough to keep himself warm.** A proverbial synonym for 'the least particle of intelligence.'—**let him bear it for a difference:** let him keep that fact as a mark in his coat of arms. A *difference* is a slight variation in such a coat, usually indicating that one belongs to a younger branch of the family.—**for it . . . creature:** for that modicum of intelligence is all that he has in the way of wits to show that he is a reasonable creature and not a mere dumb animal. The *horse* often serves as an example of stupidity. So in *Troilus and Cressida*, iii, 3, 125, 126: 'Heavens, what a man is there! A very horse, that has he knows not what.' Cf. *1 Henry IV*, ii, 4, 214, 215; *Julius Cæsar*, iv, 1, 29 ff.

73. **sworn brother.** In mediæval times friends would often take a solemn oath to stand by each other in life and death as faithfully as if they were brothers indeed. Cf. Chaucer, *The Pardoner's Tale*, C 697 ff (ed. Robinson, p 184):

'Lat ech of us holde up his hand til oother,
And ech of us bi comen otheres brother.'

Togidres han thise thre hir trouthes plight
To lyve and dyen ech of hem for oother,
As though he were his owene ybore brother.

77. **block:** fashion.

80. **in your books:** in your good books, in your favour; ~~one~~ of your friends. In her reply Beatrice, for the jest's sake, takes the words in their literal sense.

81. **An:** if.

82. **squarer:** quarrelsome fellow—always 'squaring off' for a fight.

88-90. **presently:** instantly.—'a: he.

91. **I will hold friends with you.** The speaker indicates that he wishes to keep on friendly terms with a lady who has such a sharp tongue

93. **You will never run mad:** Whoever may run mad as the result of accepting Benedick as a friend, *you* certainly will not.

96, 97. **your trouble.** It was the old fashion for a guest to dwell upon the trouble he gave his host. Cf. *Macbeth*, i, 6, 11-14.—**cost:** expense.

103. **charge:** burden of expense and trouble.

111, 112 **You have it full:** That's a good hit for you! You have had your answer!—**fathers herself:** proves by her likeness to her father that she is his child.

117. **his head:** his head with its white hair and beard. Benedick finds it amusing to think of Hero as closely resembling her old father

118, 119. **still:** always Cf. l. 134.—**Nobody marks you.** This indicates the beginning of the conversation between Don Pedro and Leonato, which ends at l. 146.

123, 124. **meet:** fit, appropriate.—**convert:** change.

126. **of:** by.

130-132. **dear:** great The adjective *dear* is often used merely

to emphasize the meaning of a noun.—I am of your humour for that: in *that* point my disposition agrees with yours

134-140. **still:** always.—**predestinate:** predestinated Past participles and adjectives in *-ate* (Latin *-atus*) are common. Cf. iii, 2, 1.—**an:** if.—**were.** We should say 'is' The subjunctive is due to the preceding '*twere*'—you are a rare parrot-teacher: you talk no more sensibly than one who is teaching a parrot to speak words that mean nothing.

141. **A bird . . . yours:** A bird that speaks *my* language is better than a beast that has learned *yours*, for the language that you teach him is no language at all he is a dumb beast.

143 **so good a continuer:** as good a 'stayer'; as tireless in his pace as your tongue is in talking—**keep your way:** keep on; keep going—a **God's name:** in God's name; for God's sake.

145 **with a jade's trick:** with some stupid remark that is as sensible as the tricks of a wretched nag

146. **That is the sum of all:** That sums it all up. This is the concluding remark of a conversation that has been going on between Leonato and Don Pedro ('aside') while Benedick and Beatrice have been exchanging satirical jests (ll. 118-145)

151. **at the least a month.** This does not agree with Don Pedro's words to Claudio (iii, 2, 1, 2). 'I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then go I toward Arragon' The critics balance the question whether Shakespeare forgot himself or Don Pedro changed his mind! Perhaps Wilson is right in suggesting that the Don is merely joking 'At all events, that would not be the only joke in the play

161. **We will go together.** Thus Don Pedro refuses to take precedence of Leonato. Cf. *Hamlet*, i, 5, 191. 'Nay, come, let's go together.'

165 **I noted her not.** Benedick perceives that Claudio has been attracted by Hero (who has spoken only once in this scene), and he proceeds to have some fun with him.

169. **simple true:** plain-spoken and sincere.

183-188. **speak you this . . . carpenter?** When you call her 'a jewel,' are you speaking in earnest, or are you acting the

part of a satirical fellow, as if you were to call blind Cupid a keen-eyed searcher for hares or to call Vulcan, the god of fire and the armourer of the gods, a first-rate carpenter?—**sad**: serious—**flouting Jack**: mocking fellow.—**to go in the song?** in order to be in harmony with your mood.

191, 192. **no such matter**: nothing of the kind —**an**: if.—**pos-sess'd with a fury**: as sharp-tongued as if one of the Furies had taken possession of her.

201–204. **but . . . suspicion**: who will not run the risk of getting married and thus being forced always to suspect that his wife has been false to him. The eternal jest of the cuckold's horns is in Benedick's mind. A husband, he insinuates, never knows whether horns have not grown on his head since he put on his cap—**Go to!** An interjection of protest, like our 'Go way!' (which is an old idiom) or 'Come, come!' Cf. II, I, 127; IV, 2, 84.—**sigh away Sundays**: spend your Sundays (which should be days of rest and refreshment) in sorrow, spend all your leisure time in sadness.

213. **With who?** Good Elizabethan grammar

214. **that is your Grace's part**: it is your Grace's part to ask that question

218. **If this were so, so were it utt'ed**: If I were really in love with Hero and had confided in Benedick, this is precisely the satirical fashion in which he would reveal my secret. Claudio is not quite ready to admit that he is in love, but he confesses it in his next speech.

219, 220. **Like the old tale, etc.** The tale is a version of the Bluebeard story. The heroine, who has visited the murderer's house, is relating her gruesome discoveries, pretending it was all a dream. The murderer, who is present, cries out, as she mentions one horror after another 'It is not so, nor it was not so, and God forbid it should be so!'

221, 222. **God forbid . . . otherwise**: God forbid that I should not be in love with her.

225. **to fetch me in**: to take me in; to trick me into making admissions, giving myself away.

228. by my two faiths and troths: *two*—since I am speaking to both of you.

236. in the despite of: in showing scorn for

238, 239 never . . . will: and never could show any moderation in arguing for his heretical opinions, but always supported them with the full force of his obstinacy.

240-249. That a woman . . . bachelor. Benedick speaks with mock solemnity, as if he were reciting his heretical confession of faith.—but that I will . . . pardon me: but all women must excuse me from consenting to wear a horn on which every huntsman can blow, i.e., from being a confessed and notorious cuckold.—rechate: a signal on a huntsman's horn to call back the dogs.—hang . . . baldrick: carry a bugle horn in an invisible belt; i.e., be a cuckold without knowing it.—the fine: the conclusion of the whole matter.—may go the finer: may dress in finer apparel (since I shall not have to support a wife).

252. lose more blood with love. Sighing and sorrow were thought to exhaust the blood. Every sigh was said to draw a drop of blood from the heart. Cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, III, 2, 97: 'sighs of love that costs the fresh blood dear'; 2 *Henry VI*, III, 2, 61, 63; 'blood-consuming sighs,' 'blood-drinking sighs'; 3 *Henry VI*, IV, 4, 22 'bloodsucking sighs'; *Hamlet*, IV, 7, 123, 124: 'a spendthrift sigh, That hurts by easing.'

254, 255 with drinking. Cf. Lyly, *Campaspe*, v, 2, 11, 12 (ed. Bond, II, 352). 'Good drinke makes good bloud.' For this doctrine our ancestors had the authority of Pliny's *Natural History*, xxiii, 22, 37. See Tilley, *Modern Language Notes*, XXXIX, 153-155.—with a ballad-maker's pen: with the pen of a writer of doleful love-songs. *Ballet* or *ballad* was a general term for 'song.' Cf. *As You Like It*, II, 7, 148, 149: 'a woful ballad Made to his mistress' eyebrow.'

257, 258. this faith: this heretical doctrine that thou hast just set forth so elaborately.—a notable argument: a noteworthy subject of conversation; an instance that will often be cited as remarkable.

259. in a bottle like a cat. To shoot at a cat hung up in a basket or a wooden jar was a rustic diversion.

261. **Adam:** Adam Bell, a famous archer in the old ballad 'Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudeslee' (Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, No. 116, III, 14). Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, II, 1, 13, and note

262. **Well, as time shall try:** Well, we'll leave your fate to time, for, as the proverb has it, 'time tries (i.e., tests) all things'. So Father Time in *The Winter's Tale*, IV, 1, introduces himself as—

I, that please some, try all, both joy and terror
Of good and bad, that makes and unfolds error

See Tilley, *Elizabethan Proverb Lore*, pp. 305, 306.

263. **'In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke.'** An inexact quotation from Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, II, 1 (ed. Boas, p. 21):

My Lord, though Bel-imperia seeme thus coy,
Let reason holde you in your wonted ioy.
In tyme the sauuage Bull sustaines the yoake,
In tyme all haggard Hawkes will stoope to lure,
In tyme small wedges cleaue the hardest Oake,
In tyme the Flint is pearst with softest shower,
And she in tyme will fall from her disdaine,
And rue the sufferance of your frendly paine

Cf. Thomas Watson, *Hecatompathia*, 1582, Sonnet 47: 'In time the Bull is brought to weare the yoake.' The same idea (as Halliwell notes) occurs in Ovid: 'Tempore difficiles veniunt ad aratra iuuenti' (*Ars Amatoria*, I, 471); cf. *Tristia*, IV, 6, 1, 2.

Tempore runcolae patiens fit taurus aratri
Praebet et incurvo colla premenda iugo

The passage from Kyd was perhaps in the back of Shakespeare's mind when he made Hero describe Beatrice as 'too disdainful' and add: 'I know her spirits are as coy and wild . . . As haggards of the rock' (III, 1, 34-36)

265. **pluck.** The regular Elizabethan verb for 'pull.'

268-270. **let me be vilely painted**, etc. have a wretched picture of me (with horns in my forehead) painted, and set it up on a pole in front of the showman's booth where I am on exhibition as a monster, and under this sign give notice to the public, in large letters, 'Here—' etc. Cf. *Macbeth*, v, 8, 25-27:

We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit
'Here may you see the tyrant'

See *Tempest*, II, 2, 29 ff.

271, 272. **horn-mad**. An old expression for 'stark mad,' 'raving mad.' Its origin is uncertain, but it was often brought into punning connection (as here) with the horns of a cuckold. Cf. *Comedy of Errors*, II, 1, 57.

273 **spent all his quiver**: emptied his quiver; used up all his arrows.—**in Venice**. In Shakespeare's time Venice was famous for its courtesans.

276. **you will temporize with the hours**: you will adapt yourself to the hours; as time goes on, you will have to adapt your sentiments and conduct to the changes that time brings with it

277, 278. **commend me to him**: give him my regards.

281. **matter**: mental material; intellect.

282-286. **To the tuition**, etc. In imitation of the formal close of a letter.—**tuition**: protection, guardianship.—**The sixth of July**. 'Old Midsummer Day, an appropriate date for such midsummer madness' (Wright). Cf. *Twelfth Night*, III, 4, 61.

288-291. **sometime**: sometimes—**guarded**: trimmed—**flout**: make fun of, mock.—**old ends**: old scraps or tags (odds and ends) of proverbial wisdom. So in *Richard III*, I, 3, 334-337:

But then I sigh, and, with a piece of Scripture,
Tell them that God bids us do good for evil,
And thus I clothe my naked villany
With old odd ends stol'n forth of holy writ.¹

¹Cf. Chapman, *The Widow's Tears*, III (Pearson ed., III, 47) 'He come to visit the distressed widow, apply old ends of comfort to her griefe'

But Benedick, with a slight pun, applies the phrase to 'time-honoured conclusions in letters.'—**examine your conscience:** in order to see 'if your sarcasms do not touch yourself' (Johnson).

294. **apt:** ready.

298. **Dost thou affect her?** Are you attracted by her?

299 **this ended action:** this campaign that is just finished.
Cf ll. 5, 50.

303. **that:** now that.

309. **with a book of words.** *Book* is emphatic: 'with a whole bookful of pretty speeches.' *Word* often means 'motto' or the like. See the 'words' of the knights in *Pericles*, II, 2.

310. **cherish it:** cherish that love.

311. **break with her:** broach the matter to her Cf I, 2, 15, 16; II, 1, 162; III, 2, 74.

313. **to twist:** to knit up, compose. Don Pedro smiles at the elaboration of Claudio's speech.

314, 315. **minister to:** help; do service to. Claudio is thanking Don Pedro for his offer to speak to Hero and her father in his behalf.—**his:** its.

316, 317. **Iest . . . treatise:** for fear you might think my love too sudden, I was disposed to use even more words in order to make a smooth story of it—to make it seem less abrupt in the telling. Claudio is explaining why he has 'twisted so fine a story.'

319. **The fairest grant is the necessity:** The best favour one can receive is to have what one needs.

320. **what will serve is fit:** Anything that will answer the purpose is suitable. In other words, 'One need not worry about formalities if the result is satisfactory.'—**'Tis once:** There's just one thing to bear in mind.

322 **revelling:** festivity. The word did not carry, as in modern use, the sense of excess or riot.

325. **in . . . heart:** to her in private I'll disclose my love (i.e., your love, for I shall be playing your part).

328. **break:** broach the subject.

330. **presently** without delay or loss of time.

Scene II.

1 **cousin:** nephew. *Cousin* was a general word, not merely for 'cousin' in our sense, but for 'nephew' or 'niece,' 'uncle' or 'aunt.' This nephew of Leonato's appears in the present scene only and is never mentioned afterwards. See v, 1, 297-299.

6. **they.** *News* was originally plural—'new things.'

7, 8. **the event:** the outcome, the result—they have a good cover. The next sentence explains this.—**show:** appear.

9-14 **thick-pleached:** closely screened by vines and hedges. *To pleach* is to 'plait.' Cf. iii, 1, 7.—**in mine orchard.** Leonato and his brother Antonio live together in the same mansion—a vast establishment with elaborately laid-out grounds. *Orchard* means 'garden'—not, as in modern usage, a mere plantation of fruit trees.—**discovered:** disclosed, revealed. The servant had overheard only a part of the conversation between Claudio and Don Pedro (i, 1, 318-330); and he had misunderstood what he heard, supposing that Don Pedro meant to woo Hero for himself. He did not know that Don Pedro was to impersonate Claudio in the masquerade.—**accordant:** in accord with his wishes.

15, 16. **to take the present time by the top:** to take time by the forelock. Cf. *All's Well*, v, 3, 39 'Let's take the instant by the forward top'; *Othello*, iii, 1, 52 'To take the safest occasion by the front.' Time, Opportunity, and Fortune are represented in old pictures as having only a single lock of hair, which streams out from the forehead—all the rest of the head is bald. The proverb was familiar in various forms, and Shakespeare had read one version of it in so-called *Distichs of Cato* (ii, 26)—a primary schoolbook in Latin for centuries:

Rem tibi quam noris aptam dimittere noli:
Fronte capillata, post est Occasio calva

Cf. Chapman, *Mayday*, iii (Pearson ed., II, 371): 'Occasion is bald, take her by the forelock.'—**break with you of it:** open the subject to you. Cf. i, 1, 311; ii, 1, 162.—**of it:** concerning it.

17. **any wit:** any sense.

21-23. **till it appear itself:** until it present itself as a fact.—**withal:** therewith, with it.—**peradventure:** perhaps.

26, 27. **I cry you mercy:** I beg your pardon. Cf. II, 1, 354.—**have a care:** keep an eye on things.

Scene III.

1. **What the goodyear!** What the mischief is the matter? An old slang phrase of unknown origin.

3 **that breeds:** that causes my sadness.

12-19. **born under Saturn:** born when Saturn was the ruling planet, and therefore of a Saturnian (or Saturnine) disposition—prone to every kind of dismal wickedness Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, II, 3, 30-39.

Madam, though Venus govern your desires,
Saturn is dominator over mine
What signifies my deadly-standing eye,
My silence, and my cloudy melancholy,
My fleece of woolly hair that now uncurls
Even as an adder when she doth unroll
To do some fatal execution?

.

Vengeance is in my heart, death in my hand,
Blood and revenge are hammering in my head

—**goest about . . . mischief:** dost try to cure the deadly morbidness of my disposition by mere moralizing *Mischief* is common in the sense of 'disease'—**stomach:** appetite.—**claw . . . humour:** adapt myself to no man's likes and dislikes. To *claw* means, literally, to 'scratch,' and hence it came to signify to 'please' or 'flatter'—as scratching is a relief when one itches.

21-23. **without controlment:** without being called to account for it. To *control* often means to 'rebuke' or 'restrain.'—**stood out:** rebelled.—**grace:** favour. Thus we learn that Don John

has been forgiven by his brother and that he feels the resentment which too often is cherished by a pardoned offender

28, 29. **I had rather be a canker . . . grace:** I had rather be an independent outcast than a prince's favourite courtier. A *canker* (also called *dog rose*) is a wild rose. For the contemptuous antithesis see *1 Henry IV*, 1, 3, 175, 176:

To put down Richard, that sweet lovely rose,
And plant this thorn, this canker, Bolingbroke.

Cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, III, 2, 282: 'You canker blossom!' The contrast, as expressed in the 54th *Sonnet*, is between the 'sweet odour' of the garden rose and the lack of 'perfumed tincture' in the canker—**grace:** favour.

29–39 **blood:** disposition, temper.—**of all:** by everybody—to **fashion . . . any:** to assume such a manner as shall by its hypocrisy win the undeserved affection of anybody—**decreed:** decided, determined.—**that I am:** what I am in fact.

40. **use:** profitable employment.

41. **I use it only:** I practise it exclusively Don John puns bitterly on Conrade's word *use*.

45 **intelligence:** information.

49, 50. **model:** ground plan.—**What is he for a fool?** What kind of fool is he? Cf. German *was für ein*.

51. **Marry:** why. *Marry* was originally an oath by the Virgin Mary, but it came to be used as a mere interjection. Cf. II, 3, 86; IV, 1, 211; IV, 2, 4; V, 2, 34.

54. **proper:** handsome

57. **forward March-chick:** precocious young one.

58–60. **entertain'd:** engaged, hired.—**smoking:** fumigating (by burning aromatic substances). Such was the practice in Shakespeare's time, for the art of ventilation was unknown and anything like sanitation was a thing of the future. Steevens quotes Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed 1632, p. 261: 'The smoake of Iuniper . . ., which is in great request with vs in Oxford, to sweeten our chambers'—**comes me.** *Me* is the so-called 'ethical dative,' which adds nothing to the sense but

gives a colloquial touch to the style Cf. II, 3, 115 —**sad**: serious.
—**the arras**: the tapestry hangings.

64-66 The conversation overheard (and misunderstood) by Borachio must have taken place in the interval between Scene I and Scene II, after Don Pedro and Claudio had left the garden and entered Leonato's house.

68-71. **my displeasure**: my misanthropy.—**start-up**: upstart.
—**my overthrow**: i.e., in my rebellion against Don Pedro (II, 21, 22).—**cross**: thwart.—**sure**: trustworthy; to be depended on

73-76. **cheer**: festivity—especially in the way of good things to eat—**prove what's to be done**: try to find out what we can do in the way of thwarting Claudio's plans.

77. **wait upon**: accompany you as attendants

Act II. Scene I

3-5 **tartly**: sour. Adverbs are often used with *look* and similar verbs where the modern idiom requires an adjective—**heart-burn'd**. Heartburn (with which the heart has nothing to do) is an old name for a certain symptom of indigestion. It is caused by acid from the stomach.

10, 11 **my lady's eldest son**: a spoilt child. There is no reference to any particular person, *my lady* is used in a general sense J. C. Smith compares *The Puritan*, I, 2, 55-57 (ed. Brooke, *Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p. 223). 'Sonnes and Heyres, and Fooles, and Gulls, and Ladyes eldest Sonnes'

21, 22. **shrewd of thy tongue**: shrewish, satirical. *Curst* is synonymous.

25. **that way**: in that regard.—**God sends . . . short horns**. An old proverb, often used to illustrate God's providential care of men. *Curst* means ill-tempered. Cf. Norfolk's letter to Cromwell, 1537 (*Letters and Papers*, XII, 119): 'God shall send a shrewd cow short horns'; letter of George Bowes, 1569 (Thomas Wright, *Queen Elizabeth and her Times*, I, 337). 'I truste by Goddes helpe the old adage in them shal be verified,

"God sendeth an evill-wylled cowe short horns"'; *Misogonus*, ii, 3, 65 (ed. Bond, *Early Plays*, p. 201) 'A curste cowe hath shorte hornes'; Greene, *Pandosto*, 1588 (ed. Grosart, IV, 247) 'A curst Cow hath oftentimes short hornes'

28. **Just:** just so; quite right.

34. **in the woollen:** in rough woollen blankets without sheets.

42, 43. **in earnest:** as a payment in advance to bind the bargain by which I become the bearkeeper's assistant. *Berrord* is a form of *bearward*—lead his apes into hell. Cf. Rowlands, *'Tis Merry when Gossips Meet*, 1602 (Hunterian Club ed., p. 23):

There's an old graue Prouerbe tells vs that
Such as die Maydes, doe all lead Apes in hell.

The proverb was in very common use (cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, ii, 1, 34). See Kuhl, *Studies in Philology*, XXII (1925), 453-466. It implies that such was condign punishment for a woman who had refused to do her duty in this world—namely, to marry and bear children—his apes. A bearkeeper often had a number of performing apes in his charge

46-52. **like:** in the guise of.—for the heavens: bound for heaven; on my heavenward journey—as merry . . . long. Beatrice remembers the text. 'For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven' (*Mark* xii, 25).

53, 54. **Well, niece, I trust you will be rul'd by your father.** Antonio and Leonato mistakenly suppose that Don Pedro means to woo Hero for himself (see i, 2), and it is clear from ll. 70, 71 of the present scene that Leonato has already told her that she is to accept him. Hero makes no reply to her uncle's remark. Perhaps her silence gives consent.¹ Probably, however, it is an indication of reluctance, for doubtless she has already fallen in love with Claudio (as he with her) at first sight. At all events, she soon learns from Don Pedro (who impersonates Claudio in the masquerade) that he is wooing

¹Compare the readiness with which Juliet, before she has met Romeo, agrees to her parents' wishes as to marriage with Paris (i, 3, 96-99)

her for Claudio This appears from what Don Pedro tells Claudio in ll 308-312, below.

55 **cursy**: curtsy.

62-69 **metal**: material.—**with**: by.—**I'll none**: I'll have no husband.—**kinred**: kindred

71 **in that kind**: in that regard, i.e., with reference to marriage.

73-82 **in good time**: with due regard to decorum, with such humility as befits a suitor. The pun is obvious—**too important**: too importunate—antithetic to 'in good time' The maxim 'There is measure in all things'—i.e., 'Moderation is the proper principle in life'—is a fuller expression of the traditional motto of Chilon, one of the Seven Wise Men of Greece, *Μῆδὲν ἄγαν*, 'Nothing in excess,' 'Ne quid nimis'¹—**a measure**: a stately dance, like a minuet.—**a cinque-pace**: a rapid and lively kind of dance—**state and ancientry**: antique stateliness. Hendiadys.

84. **you apprehend passing shrewdly**: Your apprehensions (your ideas about things) are extremely keen and bitter.—**passing**. An adverb—'surpassingly.'

86. **Make good room**: See that the hall is made clear for the maskers Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, i, 5, 28: 'A hall, a hall' give room'

90 **a bout**: a turn in the dance.—**friend**. Intentionally ambiguous; *friend* often meant 'lover.'

91. **So**: provided that.

97. **favour**: features, looks.—**defend**: forbid.

100, 101. **visor**: mask.—**Jove**. Thus Pedro suggests his identity.—**should be thatch'd**: should have thatch instead of hair, because the house of Baucis and Philemon, the humble entertainers of the disguised Jupiter, was 'stipulis et canna tecta'

¹Cf. 'In every thing, I woot, there lyth mesure' (Chaucer, *Troilus*, ii, 715), 'There is a moderation in all things' (Nashe, *The Unfortunate Traveller*, 1594, ed. McKerrow, II, 211, 212), 'Measure is treasure' (Skelton, *Magnyfycence*, l 126); 'In mesure is tresure' (Skelton, *Speke, Parrot*, l. 64) See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, pp 409, 410, Tilley, *Elizabethan Proverb Lore*, p 226.

palustri' (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, viii, 630). 'The roof thereof was thatched all with straw and fennish reede' (Golding's translation, 1567, p. 106). Cf. *As You Like It*, iii, 3, 10, 11: 'O knowledge ill-inhabited, worse than Jove in a thatch'd house!' Wilson thinks that Hero makes a punning allusion to 'a thatched head,' i.e., a head with matted hair.

103-110. The Quarto and the Folios give Balthasar's speeches in these lines to Benedick. Theobald made the obvious correction.

106. **qualities:** traits of character.

114. **Answer, clerk.** It was the parish clerk's office to make the responses in the church service. Balthasar, Margaret implies, has been playing a clerk's part in saying 'Amen.'

115. **The clerk is answered:** If I am the clerk, I am answered instead of answering. Therefore I have nothing more to say.

118. **At a word:** to answer you briefly and positively.

121. **do him so ill-well:** imitate him so well in his feebleness

122. **his dry hand.** A traditional symptom of old age or debility. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, i, 3, 71-79.—**up and down:** out and out; exactly.

127-129. **virtue:** excellence of any kind.—**Go to.** See i, 1, 202, note.—**Graces:** good qualities.—**there's an end:** that's all there is to it; there's no more to be said.

131. **you shall pardon me:** you must excuse me from telling.

132. **Nor . . . not.** Such double negatives are common in old English as in Greek. Cf. i. 323; iii, 1, 55; v, 2, 40, 41.

135. **the 'Hundred Merry Tales.'** A coarsely humorous book, very popular in Shakespeare's day.

143-149. **libertines:** free livers, loose livers. Not so specialized in meaning as in modern English. Cf. *As You Like It*, ii, 7, 65-69, note.—**the commendation:** that which recommends him to them; that for which they like him.—**villany:** his malicious satire.—**in the fleet:** somewhere in this company of maskers.—**boarded.** To *board* often meant simply to 'accost,' to 'speak to.' Hence the pun.

152, 153. **break a comparison or two.** Beatrice adapts the

phrase 'to break a lance' (in a tournament) Cf. II, 3, 246, 247. A *comparison* is a 'satirical comparison' Wright compares I *Henry IV*, II, 4, 270 ff.:

Falstaff. You starveling, you elf-skin, you dried neat's-tongue —
O for breath to utter what is like thee!—you tailor's yard, you sheath, you
bowcase, you vile standing tuck!

Prince Well, breathe awhile, and then to it again, and when thou hast
tired thyself in base comparisons, hear me speak but this.

—*peradventure*: perhaps.

157. *follow the leaders*: i.e., in the dance.

160. *turning*. Beatrice puns, as usual. *Turning* means (1) 'a turning in the road,' 'a by-road,' and (2) 'a movement in the dance.'

161, 162. *Sure my brother is amorous on Hero*. Don John had supposed that his brother meant to woo Hero for Claudio (I, 3, 64-66), but Don Pedro has been acting the part of a lover so well that Don John is persuaded that he had actually fallen in love with her. We are not to suppose that Claudio heard this remark.—*to break with him*. See I, 1, 311, note.

168. *very near . . . love*: a very intimate friend of my brother's.

172. *honest*: honourable.

177. *to-night*. This modifies *swore*. Marriages were celebrated in the morning

178. *banquet*: a light repast of wine and sweetmeats.

180. *these ill news*. For the plural cf. I, 2, 6.

183. *the office*: the business.

184. *all hearts use*: let all hearts use Subjunctive.

187. *Against whose charms*: when exposed to whose spells — *meltdeth*. The allusion, as Capell notes, is to image magic, which has been prevalent from very ancient times. An effigy of wax, clay, wood, metal, or almost any substance, is pierced with nails, pins, or thorns, and burned or slowly roasted. The victim is expected to suffer corresponding torments, to pine away as the puppet melts or crumbles, and to die when it is stabbed, to the heart. See Kittredge, *Witchcraft in Old and New England*, 1929, Chapter III.—*blood*: passion.

188. **accident of hourly proof:** an occurrence of which every hour affords an example.

194-196. **willow.** The weeping willow was a symbol for grief and especially for the grief of disconsolate lovers. A willow garland was the wreath that such a lover was said to wear. Compare Desdemona's song in *Othello*, iv, 3, 41 ff.—

County: Count.—an usurer's chain. A long gold chain was a regular adornment in a rich man's attire.

201, 202. **drovier:** drover, cattle-dealer.—**So they sell bullocks.** Beatrice means that, when the drover sells an animal, he wishes the purchaser good luck.

207. **the post.** Benedick puns on *post* in the sense of 'messenger'—the person who brought you the news (ll 198, 199) but is not guilty of the offence for which you are angry. He alludes to some comic tale in which a blind man lashes a post, thinking he is punishing a thievish boy. The tale has not been identified.

208. **If . . . you:** If it is impossible to induce *you* to leave *me*, *I'll leave you*

215-217. **so . . . reputed:** in *that* conclusion (in thinking I am known as the Prince's fool) I am too ready to do myself an injustice, for I am sure I have no such reputation.—**It is the base (though bitter) . . . gives me out:** It is Beatrice's contemptible disposition that (ascribing to the whole world her own personal feelings with regard to me) thus describes me; but, though I may regard her disposition as contemptible, I find that I am stung by it—I cannot bear her slander without cringing.—**as I may:** as best I can.

219, 220. **Troth:** by my faith.—**Lady Fame.** The goddess of report and rumour. In 2 *Henry IV* she enters, clothed in a costume 'painted full of tongues,' and speaks the Induction. See also *Æneid*, iv, 173 ff.; Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, xii, 39 ff.; Chaucer, *The House of Fame*. Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, ii, 1, 126, 127:

The Emperor's court is like the House of Fame,
The palace full of tongues, of eyes and ears

—**in a warren:** i.e., in a rabbit warren—a solitary and melancholy place.

229. **The flat transgression of a schoolboy:** nothing more or less than the error of a stupid schoolboy.

239. **them:** the nestlings.

241, 242. **If . . . honestly:** If they sing as you say they will, then what you tell me is true; i.e., If I find that you really reach Hero to love Claudio, then I shall know that you are telling me the truth.—**answer:** agree with; accord with.

244. **wrong'd:** slandered.

246. **misus'd:** abused (in her talk).

250. **a great thaw.** At such a time, in Shakespeare's day, the roads were almost or quite impassable and all visiting and gaiety were at a standstill; one could only stay at home moping.

251-270. **with such impossible conveyance:** with such superhuman dexterity — **a man at a mark:** a man set up as a target.— **She speaks poniards.** Cf. *Hamlet*, iii, 2, 414: 'I will speak daggers to her.'—**her terminations:** i.e., apparently, the terms that she uses to define or describe one—**to the North Star:** to the ends of the earth.—**Hercules.** Hercules, when enslaved to Omphale, wore her clothes while she attired herself in his lion-skin robe and carried his club; he was also forced to spin (Ovid, *Fasts*, ii, 317 ff.; *Heroides*, ix, 55 ff.). Beatrice, says Benedick, would have humiliated him even more than that. Cf. iii, 3, 146.—**the infernal Ate:** the goddess of discord. Cf. *King John*, ii, 1, 63: 'An Ate stirring him to blood and strife.'—**conjure her:** send her home to hell by his exorcisms — **follows her:** attends her wherever she goes: not, as Boas interprets it, 'follow her to earth and leave hell free,' for Benedick thinks of hell as a very dreadful place, but the Beatrice-haunted earth, he says, is even worse.

277, 278. **Prester John.** A fabulous monarch of the Far East, who united the offices of King and Christian priest. *Prester* is a condensed form of *Presbyter*.—**the great Cham:** the great Khan of Tartary, ruler of the Mongols. Cf. *Batman upon*

Bartholome, xv, 86 (1582, fol 232 v^o) 'Cathay, a greate region in the East part of the worlde it is diuided into nine Realmes all bee vnder y^e great Cham.'—the Pygmies: who were supposed to live in the mountains of India.

287-291 This passage suggests that there had been a flirtation between Benedick and Beatrice before he went to the war. Obviously, however, there had been no serious love-making.—use: interest.

302. **Neither**: not sick either.

305, 306. **civil as an orange**. A 'Civil orange' was an orange from Civil, i.e., Seville. It is described in Cotgrave's *Dictionarie*, 1611 (cited by Dyce), as 'betweene sweet and sour,' and that is 'exactly what Claudio was, neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well' (Furness)—of that jealous complexion. Yellow is the traditional colour of jealousy. See *Winter's Tale*, II, 3, 105-107; *Merry Wives*, I, 3, 110, 111; Middleton, *More Dissemblers besides Women*, v, 1, 104, 105 (ed. Bullen, VI, 463): 'His jealous laundress That for the love she bears him starches yellow.'

307-311. **your blazon**: your description of him. To *blazon* a coat of arms is to describe it in the technical language of heraldry.—so: i.e., jealous.—his conceit is false: his understanding of the case is incorrect—**broke with her father**. Cf. i, 1, 311. Don Pedro had broached the subject to Leonato and obtained his consent to the match in the interval between l 160 and l. 218.

314, 315 **all grace say Amen to it!** May all the favour of God confirm it!

323. **not . . . neither**. See l. 132, note.

325, 326. **poor fool**: poor innocent creature. *Fool* is common as a term of affection or compassion. The Nurse speaks of the infant Juliet as 'pretty fool' (I, 3, 31, 48). Cf. *King Lear*, v, 3, 305; 3 *Henry VI*, II, 5, 36. Perhaps Beatrice has in mind also some such idea as that which Rosalind expresses in *As You Like It*, IV, 1, 27, 28: 'I had rather have a fool to make me merry than experience to make me sad.'—on the windy side of care: to the windward of care (and so not exposed to its blasts). Cf

Twelfth Night, III, 4, 181. 'Still you keep o' th' windy side of the law.'

330-333. **Good Lord, for alliance!** 'Good Lord, how many alliances are forming!' (Boswell) — **goes to the world:** gets married. A common idiom. To *go to the world* is, literally, to abandon the condition of celibacy and take up a 'worldly' life. — **I am sunburnt:** I am so tanned by the sun that nobody wants to marry me. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, I, 3, 281-283.

He'll say in Troy when he retires,
The Grecian dames are sunburnt and not worth
The splinter of a lance

Only a fair complexion was thought beautiful by the Elizabethans. Cf. III, I, 63. — '**Heigh-ho for a husband!**' This seems to have been a proverbial phrase (cf. III, 4, 54, 55). Wright compares Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, III, 2, 6, 3 (ed. 1652, p. 565) 'Hai-ho for a husband cries she, a bad husband, nay the worst that ever was is better then none' *Heigh-ho* is the interjection expressing a long-drawn sigh (see *As You Like It*, IV, 3, 169). In the Pepys collection of ballads (IV, 9) in the library of Magdalene College, Cambridge, there is a song entitled 'Hey ho, for a Husband. Or, the willing Maids wants made known' It begins 'You maidens that are fair and young' Malone noted this. It is not old enough, however, to have been known to Shakespeare.

335, 336 **getting:** begetting. — **got:** begot.

338. **come by:** manage to get.

343, 344. **no matter:** nothing serious or sensible.

345. **offends:** displeases. Much milder in sense than in modern usage.

354 **I cry you mercy:** I beg your pardon for my neglect. Cf. I, 2, 26. — **By your Grace's pardon.** A mere polite farewell, like the modern 'Excuse me.'

357-361. **sad:** serious — **unhappiness:** some amusing roguery, or other, either in speech or action. Cf. *All's Well*, IV, 5, 66 'A shrewd knave and an unhappy' — i.e., 'sharp-tongued,' 'satirical.'

364, 365. **mocks . . . out of suit:** makes fun of them so that they do not dare to woo her.

370. **County:** Count Cf. l. 195.

374-376. **son.** Often used by prospective fathers-in-law in old times. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, iii, 4, 16—a just **severnigh**: an exact week.—**answer my mind:** accord with what I should think fitting for so important an occasion

377-386. **breathing:** time to take breath, interval of inaction.—**fain:** gladly.—**minister:** afford, furnish.

387, 388. **I am for you:** I'm ready to help you in your plan—**watchings:** keeping awake.

391. **office:** service

393-395. **unhopefullest:** least promising.—**strain:** lineage, family.—**approved:** tested.—**honesty:** honourable character.

397-402. **helps.** Abstract nouns are often pluralized when they refer to more than one person. Cf 'our loves' (iii, 1, 114); 'wisdoms' (iv, 1, 188; v, 1, 238).—**practise on:** work upon him by trickery. A *practice* often means a 'plot' or 'stratagem.' Cf. iv, 1, 189.—**in despite of:** in spite of.—**his queasy stomach:** his delicate digestion—as of one who is very fussy about his fare.—**the only love-gods.** For *only* see iii, 1, 92, note.—**my drift:** my scheme

Scene II

1. **shall marry:** is to marry.

3. **cross it:** thwart the match.

4-6. **med'cinable to me:** a cure for what ails me.—**in displeasure to him:** in my dislike of him.—**his affection:** what he likes or wishes

9, 10. **Not honestly:** not by any honourable means.—**dishonesty:** dishonourable conduct.—**in me:** on my part.

16. **appoint her:** arrange with her.

21-25. **to temper:** to mix, compound.—**estimation:** worth.—**hold up:** exalt.—**stale:** harlot Cf. iv, 1, 66

28, 29. **misuse:** delude—**undo:** ruin

31. **Only to despise them:** merely for the sake of doing them an injury.

32-51. **meet:** fit, convenient.—**intend:** pretend.—**cozen'd with:** cheated by.—**without trial:** without testing it —**instances:** proofs.—**term me Claudio:** i.e., in mockery. For Hero to address Borachio as Claudio under the supposed circumstances would have been as much as to say, 'You are *my* Claudio! You are the only Claudio that I care for!'—**jealousy:** suspicion—**assurance:** certainty.—**the preparation:** i.e., for the marriage

52-57. **Grow this . . . can:** Let this come to whatever evil result is possible.—**cunning:** skilful, clever.—**ducats.** A gold ducat is usually estimated as worth about ten shillings; but the purchasing power of money is so different from what it was in old times that such figures are not very significant.—**presently:** immediately.

Scene III

4. **orchard:** garden. See 1, 2, 9, note.

5. **I am here already.** A conventional phrase for 'I will do the errand and return in an instant.' So the Clown in *All's Well*, when the Countess bids him take a message to Helena, replies: 'I am there before my legs' (ii, 2, 72), i.e., 'faster than my legs will carry me.'

8-10. **dedicates his behaviours to love:** devotes all his attention to behaving as a lover should.—**argument of his own scorn:** the subject of self-contempt.

13, 14. **the tabor and the pipe:** the music of social intercourse as opposed to martial music. A tabor is a small drum.—**mile.** A good old plural. Cf. iii, 3, 134

15, 16 **carving:** devising.—**doublet:** a kind of jacket

17-37. **orthography:** a person who is very fussy and scrupulous about always using the right word and pronouncing it correctly. Compare the lecture of the pedant Holofernes in

Love's Labour's Lost, v, 1, 18 ff.—with these eyes: with the eyes of a lover.—graces: fine qualities.—be: are, exist.—in my grace: into favour with me.—I'll none: I'll have nothing to do with her.—cheapen: bargain for.—noble, or not I for an angel: She must be of noble birth or I won't take her, even if she is an angel. The pun is obvious. A *noble* was a coin worth one third of a pound sterling, an angel was a coin worth half a pound.—of what colour it shall please God: i.e., if these other conditions are satisfied, I will not insist on having her hair of this or that colour.

41. to grace harmony: to do honour to the music.

44. We'll fit the kid-fox with a pennyworth: We'll give the sly young fellow good payment for eavesdropping; he shall hear more than he bargained for. For *kid-fox* Warburton substituted *hid-fox*. Capell accepted this conjecture, believing that Claudio alludes to the game in which one player hides and the others search for him. This sport, to be sure, is mentioned by Hamlet: 'Hide fox, and all after' (iv, 2, 31); but no emendation seems necessary here.

44 (stage direction). So in the Quarto. The Folio omits it, but has, before l. 39, *Enter Prince, Leonato, Claudio, and Iacke Wilson*. This actor obviously played the part of Balthasar at some performance, though doubtless not the first one. There was a John Wilson who was born in 1595, took the degree of Doctor of Music at Oxford in 1644 or 1645, and became Professor of Music there in 1656; but he can hardly be this Jack.

46. tax not: task not.

48-50. the witness: evidence.—still: always.—To put a strange face on his own perfection: to pretend not to recognize its own perfection—let me woo no more: do not make me coax you any longer.

55. argument: talk.

58. crochets. A pun, as usual: (1) 'he actually talks in musical notes' (a crotchet being a quarter note); (2) 'he uses punning tricks'—'whimsical turns of phrase.' Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, iv, 5, 120.

59 Note . . . **nothing!** Thus Don Pedro repeats Balthasar's mock-modest remark and comments on it. 'Upon my word, he actually talks of "noting notes" and "noting"—and it all amounts to *nothing*!' *Nothing* was almost or quite identical in pronunciation with *noting*. It rhymes with *doting* in the 20th *Sonnet*.

60-62. **Now divine air!** Now, I suppose, Don Pedro is ready to call this tune 'divine'! Benedick pretends to be insensible to the charm of music.—**hale:** draw.—**a horn:** a hunting horn—something more masculine than these stringed instruments!—**when all's done:** after all.

69. **bonny:** cheerful.

71. **Hey nonny, nonny.** A cheerful refrain Cf. *As You Like It*, v, 3, 18

72-75. **moe.** Not a condensed form of *more* but an independent formation from the same root—**dumps:** sorrowful moods. Not an undignified word in Shakespeare's time—**heavy:** mournful—**ever so:** always just as it is now.—**leavy:** leafy

79, 80 **for a shift:** for an emergency

81-85. **An:** if—**bode no mischief:** be not a portent of misfortune—like the howling of a dog in the night.—**as live:** as lief,—**the night raven.** The croaking of a raven was thought to be ominous, especially in the night Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, v, 2, 191, 192 'I would croak like a raven, I would bode, I would bode.'

86. **Yea, marry:** Yes, to be sure. Addressed to Claudio, with whom Don Pedro has been in conference during Benedick's 'aside' (ll. 81-85). The subject of their talk appears from what follows (ll. 92 ff.). They are ready, with Leonato's help, to carry out their plan to bring about a marriage between Benedick and Beatrice (ll. 1, 377 ff.).

95, 96. **Stalk on . . . the fowl sits:** Go on quietly, the bird has alighted and now is the time to catch him!

102. **Sits . . . corner?** Is *that* the way the wind blows?

105. **enraged:** madly passionate.—**past . . . thought:** Thought

can go infinitely beyond facts, but this love of hers is greater even than thought can imagine.

111. **discovers:** reveals, shows. Cf. l. 161; III, 2, 96.

112. **effects:** outward signs.

115. **sit you.** The so-called 'ethical dative.' See i, 3, 59, note.

123. **a gull:** a hoax

126. **Hold it up:** Keep it up, keep on with the game we are playing.

133. **encount'ed him with scorn:** matched him in contemptuous skirmishing.

144. **between the sheet:** in the folded sheet of paper.

145. **That:** Yes, that's the one I meant.

147-150. **to write:** as to write.—**flout:** mock.

155. **patience:** endurance.

156, 157. **ecstasy:** madness. Cf. *Hamlet*, II, 1, 102-106:

This is the very ecstasy of love,
Whose violent property fordoes itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings
As oft as any passion under heaven
That does afflict our natures.

—**overborne:** overcome.—**sometime:** sometimes

161. **discover it:** reveal it to him. Cf. l. 111.

164, 165. **an alms:** a deed of charity.—**excellent sweet:** very charming. *Excellent* is an adverb here.

169, 170. **blood:** natural impulse—almost equivalent to 'human nature.'—**proofs:** examples, instances.

175, 176. **dotage:** doting affection.—**daff'd all other respects:** put aside (disregarded) all other considerations. *Daff* is merely another pronunciation of *doff*.

180-184. **will die:** is resolved to die.—**bate:** abate, give up.—**crossness:** perversity, contrariness.

185-187. **make tender:** make him an offer.—**contemptible:** contemptuous, scornful.

189-192. **proper:** handsome—a good outward happiness: an attractive exterior.—**wit:** intelligence, mental alertness.

205. **by:** to judge by.—**large:** broad, indecorous.

209, 210. **wear it out with good counsel:** work out her own cure by considering what is best for herself.

218 **Dinner.** In l. 40 the time is defined as 'evening' The Elizabethans dined at or about noon. Editor after editor has called attention to this apparent inconsistency. Perhaps Shakespeare made a slip, but, since 'good evening' was the regular salutation after noon had struck, it may be that *evening* means merely 'afternoon' and that dinner was a little late—say at lunch-time!

219. **upon this:** as a result of this talk of ours (which he has overheard). *Upon* or *on* is common in this sense (as in the modern *on compulsion, on purpose*). Cf. iv, 1, 214, 224; iv, 2, 55, 64; v, 1, 249, 257; v, 2, 50, v, 4, 3, 96.

222-225. **carry: manage.—when they hold . . . dotage:** when each thinks that the other is in love.—**and no such matter:** and yet that is not the case —**merely:** purely, out and out.—**a dumb show:** a piece of action without words, like a pantomime.

226-229. **sadly borne:** carried on seriously—in earnest.—**affections:** feelings of affection —**have their full bent:** are intense in the highest degree. The figure comes from *bending* a bow. —**censur'd:** judged.

241. **hear their own detractions:** hear themselves censured for their faults.—**can put them to mending:** can undertake to cure themselves of those faults.

243. **reprove:** disprove, confute.

246-251. **some odd quirks and remnants:** some few tricks of phrase and old fragments of wit.—**broken on me.** See note on ii, 1, 152.—**meat:** food.—**quips:** gibes.—**sentences:** wise (or would-be-wise) sayings—*sententiae*.—**awe . . . humour:** frighten a man from the course of action that his fancy prompts.

263, 264. **knife's:** knife's.—**a daw:** a jackdaw—proverbially a stupid bird. Beatrice implies that she should be silly to take pleasure in doing Benedick a favour.—**withal:** with it.—**tomach:** appetite. Cf. i, 3, 17.

ACT III Scene I

3. **Proposing**: talking, conversing. Cf. l. 12

7. **pleached**. Cf. 1, 2, 9.

10. **advance their pride . . . bred it**: carry their arrogance to such a height that they rebel against the ruler whose favour made them great. *Advance* means 'raise' Cf. *Tempest*, 1, 2, 408: 'The fringed curtains of thine eye advance'; *Twelfth Night*, ii, 5, 36 'his advanc'd plumes.'

12, 13. **propose**: talk Cf. l. 3.—**thy office**: thy part in the affair.—**Bear thee well**: carry thyself well; play thy part well.

14. **presently**: immediately

16. **trace this alley**: stroll at a leisurely pace along this walk.

21. **Of this matter**: of such material as will make up this conversation.

22, 23. **crafty arrow**: i.e., the arrow that Cupid will choose in this particular case—**only wounds by hearsay**: wounds by hearsay only—by mere hearsay.

30. **couched**: hidden.—**woodbine**: honeysuckle. Cf. l. 8.

36 **haggards**: wild hawks. Cf. the passage from Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* in the note on i, 1, 263.

42. **To wish him wrestle**: to advise him to wrestle.

44-46. **Doth not . . . upon?** Does Benedick not deserve as much prosperity and happiness in marriage as a match with Beatrice would bring him?

48. **may be yielded**: can be granted.

52. **Misprizing**: despising, undervaluing.—**what**: whatever.

54. **All matter else seems weak**: All subjects seem trivial to her except her own clever ideas and witty speeches.

55. **Nor . . . affection**: nor form in her mind any clear conception—or, indeed, even a vague idea—of what love is.

60, 61 **How**: however.—**rarely featur'd**: beautiful in face and form.—**spell him backward**: turn all his good points into defects. Steevens and Wright note examples of such satire in Lyly's *Euphues*:

If one bee harde in conceiuing, they pronounce him a dowlte, if guen to study, they proclayme him a duns, if merrye a iester, if sadde a Sanct, if full of wordes, a sottie, if without speach, a Cypher, if one argue with them boldly, then is he impudent, if coldely an innocent, if there be reasoning of diuinitie, they cry, *Quae supra nos nihil ad nos*, if of humanitie, *Sententias loquitur carnifex* (ed. Bond, I, 195).

Dost thou not knowe that woemen deeme none valyaunt, vnlesse he be too venturous? That they accompte one a dastarde, if he be not desperate, a pinche penny, if he be not prodigall, if silente a sottie, if full of wordes a foole? Peruersly do they alwayes thinck of their louers, and talke of them scornfully, nudging all to be clownes, which be no courtiers, and all to be pingers, that be not coursers (I, 249).

If he be cleanly, then terme they him proude, if meane in apparel, a slouen, if talle, a longis, if shorte, a dwarfe, if bolde, blunte, if shamefaste, a cowarde. . . . If she be well sette, then call hir a Bosse [a lump], if slender, a Hasill twigge, if Nutbrowne, as blacke as a coale, if well couloured, a paynted wall, if she be pleasaunt, then is she a wanton, if sullemne, a clowne, if honeste, then is she coye, if impudent, a harlotte (I, 254).

63, 64. **black:** of dark complexion. Cf ii, 1, 331.—**drawing** . . . **blot:** in trying to draw a comic figure, succeeded only in making an ugly and shapeless one.

65, 66. **an agate:** a tiny figure cut in the agate set in a ring. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, I, 4, 55, 56. 'In shape no bigger than an agate stone On the forefinger of an alderman'—**with:** by.

70. **simpleness:** simplicity; i.e., sincerity of character, straightforwardness—**purchaseth:** deserve.

71. **carping:** faultfinding—**commendable.** Note the accent.

72, 73. **No, not . . . commendable:** No, not to be so odd and so eccentric as Beatrice is—that, as you say, cannot be regarded as praiseworthy.—**from all fashions.** This phrase repeats and emphasizes the meaning of *odd*. *From* is emphatic: 'away from,' 'out of harmony with,' 'contrary to.' Cf. *Julius Caesar*, I, 3, 34, 35.

76. **press me to death.** Pressing to death by laying heavy weights upon the body was the regular English penalty for 'standing mute,' i.e., for refusing to plead 'guilty' or 'not guilty' when accused of felony.

78. **waste inwardly.** Every sigh was said to draw a drop of blood from the heart. See I, 1, 252, note.

80. **tickling**. Trisyllabic: *uckeling*

84. **honest**: honourable—i.e., not inconsistent with chastity.

90. **priz'd to have**: appraised to have; credited with having.

92. **the only man**: the very best man. *Only* is used to express unique excellence. Cf. ii, 1, 401, iii, 4, 75; *As You Like It*, ii, 7, 34: 'Motley's the only wear'; iii, 4, 12, 13: 'Your chestnut was ever the only colour'; *Hamlet*, ii, 2, 420, 421: 'These are the only men.'

96. **bearing**: deportment.—**argument**: discourse—not 'discussion' but 'style in talk,' 'ability to sustain his part in conversation'

101. **Why, every day to-morrow!** Why, I shall be a married woman every day of my life after to-morrow's wedding! Hero's reply twists the sense of Ursula's question.

103. **furnish me**: dress me with.

104. **lim'd**: caught as with birdlime—a sticky substance smeared upon twigs to catch birds Cf. *Hamlet*, iii, 3, 68, 69: 'O limed soul, that, struggling to be free, Art more engag'd'

105. **by haps**: merely by luck and chance.

107. **What fire is in mine ears?** What makes my ears burn so? An allusion to the old saying that, when our ears burn, it is a sign that somebody, somewhere, is talking about us—and not always to our credit. This is Warburton's explanation, and it fits the context admirably. Cf. William Perkins, *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft*, 1608, p. 72: 'Let his eares tingle or burne, he is perswaded he hath enemies abroad, and that some man either then doth, or presently will speake ill of him.' Wright rejects it because, as he says, 'this is only supposed to happen when the person talked of is absent, which is not the case here.' But the situation certainly justifies Beatrice's use of the saying, for she supposes that the speakers thought she was absent. Wright's own interpretation—'Beatrice had heard what fired her ears with curiosity to hear more'—is out of accord with the rest of her speech. See Tilley, *Elizabethan Proverb Lore*, p. 131.

110. **No glory lives behind the back of such**: 'The proud and contemptuous are never extolled in their absence' (Staunton).

112. **Taming my wild heart.** Cf. ll. 35, 36.

114. **our loves.** The plural of abstract nouns is often used when more than one person is referred to. Cf. 'your two helps' (ii, 1, 397), 'wisdoms' (iv, 1, 188, v, 1, 238).

116. **Believe it better than reportingly:** give more credit to it than one gives to mere report. Beatrice thus reveals to the audience that she has always thought well of Benedick in spite of her gibes.

Scene II.

1. **I do but stay,** etc. See i, 1, 151, note.—**consummate:** consummated. Cf. i, 1, 135, note.

3. **bring you:** escort you; go with you as an attendant.—**vouchsafe me:** allow me.

5-13. **as to show . . . wear it.** Steevens aptly compares *Romeo and Juliet*, iii, 2, 28-31:

So tedious is this day
As is the night before some festival
To an impatient child that hath new robes
And may not wear them

be bold with . . . company: take the liberty of asking Benedick to give me the pleasure of his society.—**hangman:** rascal. Dyce cites *Two Gentlemen*, iv, 4, 61: 'the hangman [i.e., rascally] boys.'—**as sound as a bell.** Still a common proverbial comparison. Cf. Chapman, *All Fools*, iii (Pearson ed., I, 158): 'Ile make your head as sound as a bell.' See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, pp. 589, 590. Steevens detects 'a covert allusion to the old proverb: "As the fool thinketh, So the bell clinketh."'

14. **What his heart thinks, his tongue speaks.** Cf. *Matthew*, xii, 34: 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.'

16. **sadder:** more serious,—not, more sorrowful. Cf. ii, 1, 357

18. **truant:** inconstant fellow.

22. **Draw.** The regular old word for *extracting* a tooth. Since to 'draw' meant also to 'eviscerate'—*hanging, drawing*,

and *quartering* being the regular punishment for traitors—Don Pedro's 'draw' suggests hanging, and Benedick curses his tooth with a 'Hang it!' This reminds Claudio of the teeth he has seen hung up as signs in the shop windows of barbers (the dentists of those days), and he remarks that, whereas in the regular course of events a tooth had to be drawn before it was hung up, Benedick should follow the executioner's practice—hang the culprit first and then draw him.

27. a humour or a worm. Such was the old explanation. Furness cites *Batman vppon Bartholome*, v, 20:

The cause of such aking is humors that come downe from the head, eyther vp from the stomacke . . . Also sometime teeth be pearced with holes & sometime by worms they be changed into yelow colour, greene, or black al this cometh of corrupt and euill humours, that come downe of euill meates by the sinnewes to the strings of the teeth . . . And if Wormes be the cause, full sore ache is bred for they eating, pearce into the subtil sinew, and make the teeth to ake, and grieue them very sore, by sore humors within either without, that infecteth the sinewes of feelyng (ed. 1582, fol. 45).

Henry Chettle, describing the quacks of his day, remarks: 'Another sort, get hot wiers, and with them they burne out the worme that so tormentz the greeued [i.e. the sufferer from toothache]' (*Kind-Harts Dreame*, 1592, ed. Harrison, p. 33).—**humour**: a morbid secretion

30, 31. **Yet**: in spite of everything, no matter what anybody else says. The emphatic Elizabethan *yet*—**I**: emphatic—**fancy**: love

32-39. **strange disguises**, etc. Don Pedro applies to Benedick the satirical jest that, in Shakespeare's day, was often used to describe the fantastic attire of English gallants. Thus Portia says of her English wooer: 'How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour everywhere' (*Merchant of Venice*, 1, 2, 79-82).—**slops**: loose breeches.—**doublet**: a close-fitting jacket. Long cloaks were the fashion in Spain.—**no fool for fancy**: not befooled by love; no victim of love.

42. **bode**: portend, signify. Cf. ii, 3, 84

46, 47 **stuff'd tennis balls**. Cf. Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (Pearson ed., I, 73). 'I'll shave it off, and stuffe tennis balls with it'; *Coriolanus*, ii, 1, 97-99. 'Your beards deserve not so honourable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion or to be entomb'd in an ass's packsaddle.' As a soldier, Benedick was heavily bearded when he returned from the campaign Cf. *As You Like It*, ii, 7, 149, 150. 'A soldier, Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard [i.e., panther]'

50. **civet**. A favourite perfume in old times. It comes from the civet cat

55. **note**: mark, sign.

56. **wash his face**: i.e., with cosmetics.

57. **for the which**: with reference to which.

61, 62. **which is new-crept into a lutestring**: which is recently changed to a tune of love 'New-crept' is Boas's emendation for 'now crept'—**govern'd by stops**: so controlled by his love that it does not run without restraint, as of yore. *Stops* or 'frets' are small bars of wire or wood on a musical instrument to guide the fingering by indicating the division into notes

63. **heavy**: sorrowful

68. **conditions**: traits of character.—**in despite of**: in spite of.

70. **with her face upwards**. Cf. *The Winter's Tale*, iv, 4, 131, 132 (quoted by Steevens). 'Not like a corse; or if—not to be buried, But quick [i.e., alive], and in mine arms'

71. **Yet is this no charm for the toothache**: Yet all this idle talk of yours provides no magic spell to cure my toothache—that is just as bad as ever it was. Cf. Lyly, *Midas*, iii, 2, 6, 7 (ed. Bond, III, 132). 'I haue tried all old womens medicens, and cunning mens chârmes, but *interim* my teeth ake.' There were many charms for an aching tooth. The most famous of them all recites how Saint Peter was cured by our Lord. It has had a triumphant popularity for at least a thousand years and is still chanted with as much efficacy as ever. See Kittredge, *Witchcraft in Old and New England*, pp. 389-393.

73. **hobby-horses**: silly jokers. The hobby-horse, ridden by

a man astride, was a ludicrous character in the old May games and morris dances. See the figure in Douce's *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, 1839, opposite p 598.

74. **For my life:** I'll bet my life on it—**break.** Cf. i, 1, 311, note.

79. **Margaret.** It was Ursula who joined Hero in playing the trick on Beatrice (iii, 1), but Margaret also had an important share in the game (iii, 1, 1-14).

80. **the two bears:** There is a humorous suggestion that Benedick and Beatrice are unnaturally savage, for it is an old saying that 'one bear will not bite another' (*Titulus and Cressida*, v, 7, 19). Cf. Juvenal, xv, 164. 'Saevius inter se convenit ursis.'

84. **Good den:** good e'en—i.e., good even; good afternoon. The regular salutation after midday. Cf. v, 1, 46.

90. **the matter:** the subject matter—that about which you wish to speak with me

96. **discover:** disclose. Cf. i, 2, 10, 11, 3, 161

97-103. **that:** the question whether I am your friend or not.—**aim better at me:** have a better understanding of my feelings toward you.—**by that:** by means of that which.—**For:** as for.—**holds you well:** thinks well of you.—**in dearness of heart:** in heartfelt friendship.—**help:** helped.—**bestowed:** spent, used.

104. **Why, . . . matter?** Don Pedro repeats his question (l. 90), impatient at Don John's delay in answering it.

105, 106 **circumstances short'ned:** to cut short all talk about matters of detail.—**she . . . a-talking of:** we have spent more time in talking about her than she deserves.

112-114 **to paint out:** to describe in full.—**till further warrant:** until you have further evidence to confirm my words.

120. **May:** can.

122, 123. **If you dare not . . . know:** If you have not strength of mind enough to believe your eyes, then do not admit the truth of what you know. When I show you the truth, either recognize it, or deny your knowledge of plain facts.

131-133. **till you are my witnesses:** until you can confirm my evidence.—**Bear it coldly:** Keep cool about the matter.—**let . . .**

itself: let the result of your observation serve as a proof of the fact

134. **untowardly turned:** changed from a day of joy to a day of sorrow.

135 **mischief strangely thwarting:** misfortune strangely destructive of my hopes of happiness.

136 **plague:** misfortune —**prevented:** headed off in advance, forestalled. *Prevent* in Shakespeare always keeps the force of *pie-*

Scene III.

1 Dogberry is Head Constable. Verges is Headborough—a constable of somewhat lower rank (see III, 5, stage direction). In the stage direction he is called Dogberry's 'compartner,' i.e., copartner, associate.—**true:** loyal.

2. **salvation.** The trick of making a person say the opposite of what he means is carried very far in this scene. In at least one instance—'tolerable, and not to be endured' (ll. 36, 37)—the blunder is so exquisite that posterity has adopted it as a kind of proverb. Dogberry and Verges are caricatures. actual officers of Shakespeare's time may have been quite as absurd, but they cannot possibly have been so amusing. Shakespeare's creative power has made caricatures become characters.

5. **any allegiance.** Dogberry means 'lack of allegiance.'

8. **give them their charge:** inform them what their duties are. See l 25 Malone compares Marston, *The Insatiate Countess*, III, 1, 86 ff. (ed. Bullen, III, 181). 'Come on, my hearts [i.e., my good fellows]; we are the city's security. I'll give you your charge, and then, like courtiers, every man spy out.'

9, 10. **desartless:** deserving.—**constable:** chief watchman

15. **a good name.** Doubtless Dogberry means 'a good reputation,' but he seems to be congratulating Seacoal on the beauty of his family name!—**well-favoured:** handsome.

18-26. **for your favour:** as for your features.—**such vanity:**

such a piece of showy frivolity. But perhaps Dogberry means 'such a valuable accomplishment.'—**lanthorn**. An old form of *lantern*, probably due to the fact that lanterns were often made of a thin sheet of horn—**comprehend**: for *apprehend*; i.e., 'arrest'—**vagrom**: vagrant. Dogberry means merely 'strangers wandering about the streets'

32. **none**. Emphatic: 'certainly not one'

34. **meddle**: concern themselves, have to do. Cf. l. 55.

36. **tolerable**. See l. 2, note.

45. **bills**: halberds, pikes.

50, 51. **they are not . . . for**: you are disappointed in them.

54-56. **true**: honest.—**for**: as for.—**meddle or make**: have to do with. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, i, 1, 14. 'For my part, I'll not meddle nor make no farther.'—**the more . . . honesty**: the better for your respectability.

60. **touch pitch . . . defil'd**. A text from *Ecclesiasticus*, xiii, 1 (in the so-called Apocrypha): 'He that toucheth pitch shall be defiled therewith.' See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, p. 498

76. **never answer a calf**. Thus Dogberry—though without any such intention—calls the watchman a calf.

80. **present**: represent.

82. **by'r Lady**: by our Lady—an oath by the Virgin Mary. Cf. l. 89; iii, 4, 81.

84. **statutes**. The Quarto reading. The First Folio has 'Statues,' which some editors adopt for the sake of giving Dogberry one more blunder

84. **Marry**: to be sure. See i, 3, 51, note.

89. **I think it be**. The subjunctive in indirect discourse is an old idiom. It does not indicate doubt. Cf. *Hamlet*, i, 1, 108: 'I think it be no other but e'en so.'

90-92. **Ha, ah, ha!** Dogberry clears his throat for a final instruction; but he cannot part without 'one word more.'—**An: if—counsels**: secrets.

95, 96. **sit here upon the church bench**: take a nap on this bench in the porch outside the church. Cf. l. 39: 'We will rather sleep than talk.'

100. *coil*: hubbub—*vigilant*: a blunder for *vigilant*
106, 107. *Mass*. A mere interjection; originally an oath by the mass. Cf. iv, 2, 53.—*my elbow itch'd*. A traditional sign that somebody would soon be 'at his elbow.' Cf. *Macbeth*, iv, 1, 44, 45.

By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.

—*scab*. With a pun on *scab* in the sense of 'a scurvy fellow,' 'a worthless rogue.'

108. *I will owe thee an answer for that*: I won't answer that gibe now, but I shall not forget that I owe you a smart reply.

110. *under this penthouse*. A penthouse was a 'lean-to'—an open shed having a roof with a single slope.

111-116. *like a true drunkard*: a genuine drunkard, who cannot hold his tongue—for 'in vino veritas.' The name *Borachio* means 'drunkard' (Spanish *borracho*, 'drunk,' 'drunkard'); but *Borachio*, though he has of course been drinking, is by no means drunk.—*a thousand ducats*. See ii, 2, 53, 54.

117. *dear*: costly.

119, 120. *any villany should be so rich*. *Borachio* echoes *Conrade's* word *villany* and personifies it. 'The wonder is rather that villany can afford to pay so high a price to get itself perpetrated.'

124-126. *art unconfirm'd*: lackest experience in villany; art still a novice in that profession.—*the fashion . . . is nothing to a man*: The fashion is nothing in comparison with a man. This is the text of *Borachio's* sermon: 'Fashions are always changing—they have no constancy. But men are even less constant than the fashion.' He is leading up to his statement that *Claudio* has been suddenly transformed from *Hero's* lover to her bitter enemy (ll. 167-175). *Conrade* has no idea what *Borachio* is driving at; for he seems to him to be flying off at a tangent—changing the subject abruptly from 'villany' to 'fashion' (ll. 148-152)

132. *what a deformed thief*: what a contorted, shapeless ras-

cal—having no constant or symmetrical figure, 'and so,' Borachio continues, 'he sees to it that those who follow him have likewise no constancy' (ll. 140, 141)

135, 136 **year**. An old plural. *Year* in Anglo-Saxon belongs to a class of neuter nouns in which the nominative and accusative plural are the same as the singular—**goes up and down like a gentleman**: walks about in gentleman's attire.

142-147. **reechy**: smoky—**Bel's priests**: the priests of Baal in the legend of Bel and the Dragon in the biblical Apocrypha.—**the shaven Hercules**. This must have been an eccentric representation of a scene from the romantic episode of Hercules and Omphale. At all events it does not accord with any known version of the tale. See II, 1, 257, 258, note.—**codpiece**. A part of the breeches.

150, 151 **giddy with the fashion**: just as changeable as the fashion is.

153-161. **Not so neither**: Not a bit of it! I am sticking to the point.—**leans me**. *Me* is the 'ethical dative' and adds nothing to the sense. Cf. I, 3, 59; II, 3, 115 —**possessed**: taken possession of—as if Don John were a demon who had got them completely under his control. Cf. ll. 163, 164: 'the devil my master.'—**this amiable encounter**: this lovers' meeting.

165-172. **possess'd**: took possession of—and so, made them ready to believe anything Cf. l. 160—as he was **appointed**: according to his appointment.

180. **recover'd**: discovered.—**lechery**: for 'villany.'

183. **a lock**: a long hanging lock of hair Such locks were worn by fine gentlemen and sometimes also by ruffians. Cf. l. 135.

188. **obey**. The Watchman means 'induce.*' He is doing his best to follow Dogberry's principle: 'The watch ought to offend no man' (l. 85).

190, 191. **commodity**: lot of merchandise—**taken up of these men's bills**. A pun: (1) 'bought on credit by these men. who have given their bonds in payment'; (2) 'arrested by these men's halberds' (cf. l. 45).

192 in question: 'subject to judicial trial or examination' (Steevens), 'of doubtful quality' (Wilson). Probably Conrade has both senses in mind 'when we are examined we shall hardly stand the test.'

Scene IV.

6 **rebato**: a stiff collar, supporting a ruff.

9 's: it's. Cf. l. 18.

13 **tire**: headdress.—**within**: i.e., the one which is in the inner room.—**hair**: i.e., in the headdress.

17. **exceeds**: is superexcellent.

18-22. **nightgown**: dressing gown—in **respect of**: in comparison with—**cloth-o'-gold**: cloth with gold threads woven in—**cuts**: slashes or openings in the skirt, which were either trimmed elaborately or filled in with a different material—**down**: down along Cf. Fletcher, *The Woman's Prize*, III, 2 (ed Dyce, VII, 158): 'Purple [i.e., trim] All the sleeves down with pearl.'—**side-sleeves**. Besides the real sleeves (for the arms) there was a pair of wide, open-hanging sleeves—merely for ornament—**round underborne**: trimmed round the under edge of the skirt—**quaint**: elegant

29-38 in a **beggar**: even in a beggar. Deighton cites *Hebrews*, xiii, 4 'Marriage is honourable in all'—**saving your reverence**. An apologetic phrase (*salva reverentia, save reverence*), 'respect for you being preserved,' i.e., 'spoken with no intention of offending you' This formula was often used in mentioning something indecent or unpleasant, to assure the person addressed that no disrespect was intended. Margaret means that Hero is so prudish that even the word *husband* cannot be mentioned without an apology for freedom of speech. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, I, 4, 42: 'this sir-reverence love'—**An bad thinking** . . . **true speaking**: unless impure thoughts in the hearer's mind twist the sense of what is innocently meant by the speaker.—**light**: licentious—with a customary pun—**Ask**

... else: Ask my Lady Beatrice if what I say is not true, for she is a good judge of tricks of speech.

39. **Good morrow:** good morning — **coz:** cousin

41. **the sick tune?** Hero has answered in a melancholy tone, for she has a presentiment of ill fortune. See ll. 24, 25.

45, 46. **Clap's into 'Light o' love':** Change your tune immediately into the joy of loving. Probably there is a pun on *light* in the sense of 'inconstant.' The tune of the song has come down to us (see Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, I, 224), but the words are lost.—**burden:** refrain. 'The *burden* of a song, in the old acceptation of the word, was the *base*, *foot*, or *under-song*. It was sung throughout, and not merely at the end of the verse' (Chappell, I, 222). Beatrice puns on the word: 'There's nothing heavy (sorrowful) about that song or that kind of love.'—**'s:** us. Ethical dative. See I, 3, 59, note.

48, 49 **Yea . . . heels!** Yes indeed! you say you'll dance it. If so, you'll be a light-stepper in love, easily led astray — **barnes:** bairns, children—with an obvious pun.

50, 51 **construction:** interpretation—I scorn that with my heels. An old phrase for rejecting anything with contempt—kicking it away, like a horse. Compare Gobbo's pun in *The Merchant of Venice*, II, 2, 9, 10. 'Do not run; scorn running with thy heels.'

52 **five o'clock.** For this early hour J. C. Smith compares *The Puritan*, v, 1, 7, 8 (ed. Brooke, *Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p. 246). 'Hie thee, tis past five; bid them open the Church dore, my sister is almost ready'

54. **Hey-ho!** A long yawning sigh. Cf. II, 1, 333, and note.

56. **H:** an ache (pronounced *aitch*). Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV, 7, 7, 8.

I had a wound here that was like a T,
But now 'tis made an H.

57, 58. **Well . . . star.** Margaret implies that Beatrice's illness is an aching heart: 'Well, if you haven't been false to your

faith (renounced your vow never to marry), there's no trusting to the plainest signs—we can no longer put faith in the North Star as an indication of the points of the compass when we sail the seas.'

59. **What . . . trow?** What do you suppose the fool means? *Trow* seems to be a clipped form of *trow ye* ('do you think?'), but is used as a mere interrogative particle, much like *pray*.

63. **perfume.** Perfumed gloves were fashionable in old times.

64. **I am stuff'd:** I have a cold in my head. Beatrice is accounting for her pretended illness

68. **apprehension:** quickness of wit.

71. **in your cap:** like a feather.

74. **this . . . carduus benedictus.** *This* is used in the colloquial sense (still common) to designate something that is much talked about. Steevens quotes Thomas Cogan, *The Haven of Health* (1589, chap. 44, pp. 54, 55): '*Carduus benedictus*, or blessed Thistell so worthily named for the singular vertues that it hath . . . it strengtheneth all the principall partes of the bodie, it sharpeneth both the wit and memorie, quickeneth all the senses, comforteth the stomacke, procureth appetite, and hath a speciall vertue against poyson, and preserueth from the pestilence, and is excellent good against any kind of feuer. . . . For which notable effects this herbe may worthily be called *Benedictus* or *Omnimorbia*, that is a salue for euery sore.'

75. **the only thing for a qualm:** the very best remedy for an attack of faintness See iii, 1, 92, note.

77. **some moral:** some figurative meaning (like the 'moral' of a fable).

81-92. **by'r Lady.** See iii, 3, 82, note.—**to think what I list:** as to think what I should like to think.—**nor . . . can:** nor am I pleased with the only thought that it is possible for me to have—namely, that you are not in love—**nor . . . I cannot:** nor can I—if I would . . . **thinking:** even if I should think so hard as to wear my heart out with the exertion and thus put an end to my thinking powers forever.—**will be:** will consent to be.—**can be:** i.e., even if you wished to be.—**such another:**

another who was just like you—incapable of loving.—a man: a human being—with the natural instincts of humanity.—in despite . . . he eats . . . grudging: in spite of his most earnest resolution, he eats without objection the normal food of a human being—i.e., he is in love, as it is natural and proper that a man should be.—how . . . know not: to what extent you also have been brought into accord with human nature.—as other women do: and not as an unnatural opponent to love

94. a false gallop. This means, literally, 'a canter' (regarded as an artificial gait for a horse); but Margaret's meaning is clear. 'Whatever you may say of the way in which my tongue runs, you cannot deny that it tells the truth—you *are* in love.'

Scene V.

(Stage direction) **Headborough:** a local constable.

2, 3. **confidence** sometimes means 'private conversation,' as when Juliet's Nurse says to Romeo: 'If you be he, sir, I desire some confidence with you' (II, 4, 133, 134), but here it is merely Dogberry's blunder for 'conference.'—**decerns:** concerns.

10-14. **Goodman.** The regular title for one just below the rank of gentleman—a little off the matter: not quite to the point—**blunt:** for 'sharp.' Dogberry persists in saying the exact opposite of what he means.—**God help:** God help us all to keep our wits sound when we grow old!—**honest as . . . brows.** A proverbial comparison: 'He has an honest forehead, and his heart is just as honest as his face.' Reed compares *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, v, 2, 121 (ed. Manly, II, 147): 'I am as true, I wold thou knew, as skin betwene thy browes!' Cf. *The London Prodigal*, v. 1, 295, 296 (ed. Brooke, *Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p. 216): 'as true as the skin between any mans browes here'; *Measure for Measure*, iv, 2, 162, 163 (cited by Wright): 'There is written in your brow, provost, honesty and constancy.'

15, 16. **Yes, I thank God,** etc. Verges wishes to express him-

self modestly, with the air of one who declines to accept the full measure of a compliment

19. **comparisons are odorous.** A distortion of the old saying 'Comparisons are odious.' See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, p. 110—**palabras:** for the Spanish 'pocas palabras,' i.e., 'few words,' 'don't talk too much' Cf. *Taming of the Shrew, Induction*, 1, ll. 5, 6. 'Pauca pallabris; let the world slide.'

21-24. **It pleases your worship to say so:** Your honour is so kind as to call us tedious; but, in fact, we are merely humble officers in the Duke's service. Dogberry takes *tedious* in the sense of 'rich' or 'prosperous,' as if Leonato were paying him a compliment.—**it all:** all my 'tediousness'—all the wealth I have.—**of:** on.

26. **ah?** An interrogative interjection—'eh?' 'huh?'

29. **as good an exclamation on:** as good acclamation of; as good report concerning.

33, 34. **excepting . . . presence.** A perverted apologetic formula. Dogberry means, 'if your honour will pardon me for using such words in speaking to you.' His words, however, mean, literally, that the knaves who have been arrested are the greatest rascals in Messina 'except your honourable self.'

37-39. **When . . . out.** Dogberry's perversion of the old saying 'When the wine is in, the wit is but.' See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, p. 164.—**it is a world to see!** What a strange world we live in! This seems to be Dogberry's meaning; but the phrase usually means 'It is a wonderful thing (one of the wonders of the world) to behold,' as in *The Taming of the Shrew*, 11, 1, 313. Cf. *Soliman and Perseda*, 1, 3 (Kyd, ed Boas, p. 174): 'It is a world to heere the foole prate and brag'—**God's a good man.** A quaint old phrase for 'God is good' Apperson, p. 252, quotes *A Hundred Mery Talys*, 1526, No. 85 'There came one which sayde that god was a good man.' If Dogberry means anything in particular, his intention is to thank God for making him wiser than Verges.—**of a horse:** on one horse—**one must ride behind.** Dogberry implies that it is the natural order of things for Verges to be his inferior in wisdom.

46. **Gifts that God gives.** Thus Dogberry piously ascribes his superiority to the grace of God—not to any merit of his own.

50, 51. **comprehended:** for 'apprehended,' 'arrested.'—**aspirious:** for 'suspicious'

56. **suffigance:** sufficiency—i e., what you say shall suffice; we will follow your orders.

64. **examination.** The Quarto reading; the Folios have 'examine.'

66-68. **We will spare for no wit:** We will not fail to use wisdom in our examination of them.—**Here's that:** Here (in this head of mine) is that which, etc.—**a non-come:** a *non compos mentis* This phrase, which signifies 'not of sound mind,' is understood by Dogberry to mean 'a non-plus,' i.e., a condition in which one does not know what to say or to do—**our excommunication:** the details of our examination of them Dogberry regards this word as more emphatic than *examination*.

ACT IV. Scene I.

1, 2 **Only to the plain form:** Proceed only as far as the simple formula of the marriage ceremony prescribes.—**their particular duties.** It was the custom for the priest or clergyman to preface the marriage ceremony with a brief sermon on the duties of husband and wife.

12-14. **know . . . utter it.** The Friar follows the English marriage service, but not quite word for word.—**inward:** secret, undisclosed.

20. **may:** can.

22, 23. **interjections?** . . . ah, ha, he! Benedick quotes Lily's *Latin Grammar*—the standard text-book in Shakespeare's time and long after. 'Some [interjections] are of Laughing: as, Ha, ha, he' (ed. 1651, p. 38).

29. **May counterpoise:** can counterbalance.

31. **Sweet.** Common as a mere synonym for *dear*.—**learn:** teach.

36, 37. **what authority . . . truth:** what assurance and what outward semblance of truth.—**withal:** with. Often so used at the end of a clause or sentence

39. **simple:** pure and simple. Cf. 'simple modesty' (*Romeo and Juliet*, iii, 2, 16).

42 **luxurious:** lascivious

45. **approved:** proved. Cf. ii, 1, 395

46. **Dear my lord.** *My lord* and similar vocative phrases, are often treated as single words and preceded by some adjective. *Dear* is a dissyllable.—**your own proof:** your own experience. Cf. *Cymbeline*, i, 6, 69-71. 'who knows By history, report, or his own proof What woman is.'

51 **the forehead sin:** the sinfulness of anticipating the proper time

53-55 **large:** broad, free, immodest. Cf. ii, 3, 205 —**comely:** becoming

57 **Out on the seeming! I will write against it.** Shame upon such hypocrisy! I will write satires to denounce it. Steevens cites *Cymbeline*, ii, 5, 32, 33: 'I'll write against them, Detest them, curse them.'

58. **Dian:** Diana, the maiden goddess.—**orb:** sphere. Diana is also goddess of the moon.

59. **blown:** in blossom.

60. **intemperate:** ungoverned.

63 **speak so wide:** talk so wildly—so far from the obvious facts. Steevens compares *Troilus and Cressida*, iii, 1, 97: 'No, no, no such matter! You are wide.'

65, 66. **gone about:** undertaken, planned —**stale:** harlot.

74, 75. **move:** propose, put.—**that fatherly and kindly power:** that natural authority that you have as her father.

80. **answer truly to your name:** admit that the name by which you have been called is really yours. The name is 'common stale' (l. 66). Hero does not understand the question.

82, 83. **Marry, that can Hero!** Why, Hero herself can do so. —**Hero itself:** the very word Hero has become a name for a harlot.

86 if you are a maid, answer to this: If you are a maid, you can answer this question in such a way as will prove your innocence.

88. then are you no maiden: Your reply proves that you cannot answer that question truthfully without admitting your guilt.

90. grieved: aggrieved, wronged. Cf. *Julius Caesar*, i, 2, 43; *Hamlet*, ii, 2, 65.

93. liberal: licentious in speech as in actions

100. much misgovernment: great misconduct

103. thoughts and counsels: secret thoughts. Hendiadys.

106. For thee: because of thee and thy guilt.

107-109. conjecture: suspicion.—thoughts of harm: harmful (condemnatory) thoughts—never shall it more be gracious: nevermore shall beauty seem beautiful to me. *Gracious* is a trisyllable.

113. her spirits: her vital forces.

118. may: can.

123. The story . . . in her blood: the story whose truth her blushes made perfectly clear—as plain as print. See ll. 159-165. Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, iv, 1, 75: 'Heaven guide thy pen to print thy sorrows plain.'

126. thy spirits. See l. 113.—thy shames: thy feelings of shame

127. on the rearward of reproaches: after upbraiding thee.

129. frugal nature's frame: the parsimony of Nature in her plan as to my offspring.

134. Who smirched thus and mir'd. In the 'absolute construction': 'who being smirched'; i.e., 'and if that beggar's child had been thus disgraced.'

138. on: of.

138-140. mine so much . . . Valuing of her: she who was so much my beloved that, in comparison, I hardly cared for myself at all, since I valued her so highly.—Valuing of. *Of* is often used in this way with participles. Cf. iii, 1, 63.

141-143. that: so that—the wide sea . . . again. Steevens

quotes *Macbeth*, II, 2, 60, 61.

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand?

—**may season give**: can restore to soundness—literally, can preserve from decay.

144, 145. **patient**: calm, self-controlled.—**attir'd in wonder**. Figures from clothing are common in Shakespeare. Note, for example, 'attir'd in discontent' (*Lucrece*, 1601); 'to cloak offences' (*Lucrece*, 749); 'clothe me in a forc'd content' (*Othello*, III, 4, 120); 'Though 'tis wonder that enwraps me thus' (*Twelfth Night*), IV, 3, 3.

155. **Wash'd**: he washed

157-159. **I . . . lady**: The only reason why I have so long remained silent and allowed fortune thus to run its course, is because I have been observing the lady.

160 **apparitions**. Thus the Friar personifies Hero's blushes.

164. **To burn the errors**: as heretics, holding false opinions, are burned at the stake. A natural metaphor for an ecclesiastic to use. The idea was that the errors were to be purged away by fire.

166-168. **my reading**: my ability to read character.—**my observation . . . book**: my observation of life, which, by the seal of experience, confirms my interpretation of what I have read in her face. Cf. *Macbeth*, I, 5, 63, 64:

Your face, my Thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters

For a similar figure see *Midsummer Night's Dream*, II, 2, 121, 122; *Romeo and Juliet*, I, 3, 81, 82; *Troilus and Cressida*, IV, 5, 239, *Lucrece*, 1253.—**tenure**: tenour, purport.

169. **My reverence**: my sacred profession.—**calling**: my priestly office (which has given me skill in reading character as a father confessor).—**divinity**: my theological study and training.

171. **Under**: as the victim of.

172. **grace:** virtue.

176 **proper:** its own.

182-185. **Prove you:** if you can prove.—**unmeet:** improper, unbecoming —**change:** exchange.—**Refuse me:** cast me off Cf iv, 2, 64.

186. **misprision:** mistake.

187-190. **have the very bent of honour:** are entirely devoted to honour in thought and action —**wisdoms.** Abstract nouns are often pluralized when more than one person is referred to. Cf. ii, 1, 397; iii, 1, 114, v, 1, 238 —**practice:** plotting.—**lives in:** owes its life and strength to.—**Whose . . . villainies:** whose whole strength is used to the utmost to devise and carry out villainous plans

195. **my invention:** my inventive powers; my power to make plans.

198-201. **in such a kind:** in such a manner; to such an extent —**policy of mind:** mental power in planning.—**means:** wealth —**To quit me of them thoroughly:** to enable me to settle accounts with them thoroughly.

201 ff. With the Friar's plan we may well compare the rôle of Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet*

204. **in:** at home

206. **a mourning ostentation:** a formal show of mourning rites. *Ostentation* suggests such an elaborate ceremony as might be expected in a family of very high rank

208. **Hang mournful epitaphs.** Such was the custom in Shakespeare's day See v, 3.

210 **What shall become of this?** What is to be the outcome of all this course of action? —**What will this do?** What is this meant to accomplish?

211, 212. **Marry.** See i, 3, 51, note.—**well carried:** if well carried out, managed. Cf. ii, 3, 222.—**shall:** will certainly.—**remorse:** compassion.—**some.** Emphatic

214. **on:** as the result of. Cf. ii, 3, 219, note —**travail.** This word, as here used, combines the meaning 'toil,' 'effort,' with that of 'labour in childbirth' —**look for greater birth:** expect

something more important than the mere change of slander to pity

215. **as it must be so maintain'd:** as you must insist was the fact

217-222 **Shall be:** will certainly be—**Of:** by.—**to the worth:** to its full value—**Whiles:** so long as—**we rack the value:** we strain the valuation to the utmost limit. Wright compares *Merchant of Venice*, i, 1, 180, 181:

Try what my credit can in Venice do.
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost.

—**virtue:** excellence.

224. **upon:** because of; as the result of. Cf. l. 214.

225-227. **Th' idea of her life:** the thought of her as she was when alive.—**Into his study of imagination:** into his imagination when he thinks of her—**organ of her life:** of her as she was when alive. *Organ* includes all the bodily organs that give expression to one's personality—in eye, voice, motion, etc.

230 **the eye and prospect of his soul:** his soul's eye and imaginative sight *Soul* is the emphatic word.

232 **had interest in:** could claim a share in—**liver.** Thought in old times to be the seat of the passion of love. Cf. *As You Like It*, iii, 2, 443-445.

235, 236. **Let this be so:** Assume (as it is very likely) that what I have predicted comes true—**success:** the sequel, time as it goes forward.—**the event:** the outcome.

238. **But . . . false:** But if all my forecast should turn out to be mistaken except *this* point, *this* at least will be accomplished—the belief that Hero has died will make people cease to dwell upon her shame.—**aim:** guess, conjecture, forecast.—**levell'd false:** aimed amiss.

241 **if it sort not well:** if my plan does not result successfully.

243. **reclusive:** cloistered—as the life of a nun Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, v, 3, 156, 157: 'Come, I'll dispose of thee Among a sisterhood of holy nuns'

244. **injuries:** insults

245. **let the friar advise you:** take the friar's advice

246. **inwardness and love:** intimate friendship. Hendiadys.

250. **Should:** certainly would—**Being that I flow in grief:** since I am dissolved in tears and therefore have no strength left.

251-255. **'Tis well consented:** You do well in consenting to my proposal—**Presently:** without delay.—**to strange sores strangely they strain the cure.** *They* is used in the indefinite sense (as in 'they say'): 'To heal strange sores people use heroic treatment.' To *strain the cure* is, literally, to 'apply violent remedies.' Rolfe quotes *Hamlet*, iv, 3, 9-11:

Diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are reliev'd,
Or not at all

Cf Nashe, *Christ's Teares over Jerusalem*, 1593 (ed McKerrow, II, 20): 'To desperate diseases must desperate Medicines be applyde.' See Tilley, *Elizabethan Proverb Lore*, pp 280, 281. Ll 252-255 make a quatrain. Note also the alliteration. Thus this part of the scene comes to a formal close

255. **prolong'd:** merely put off (postponed) and not given up.

260. **freely:** willingly—and therefore no request from you is needed.

266. **A very even way:** a very level road, without obstacles; an easy way.

267. **May:** can. 'Is it within human power?'

268. **It . . . yours:** Yes, it is a service that a man can do, but you are not the man to do it. See l 292.

271. **As strange . . . know not:** as much of a stranger as something that I am unacquainted with. Beatrice plays with the word *strange*.

272. **I loved nothing so well as you.** Intentionally ambiguous—(1) I loved you more than I love anything else; (2) I loved you no better than I love nothing at all

277. **Do not swear, and eat it:** i.e., eat the words of your assertion—take back (retract) your assertion that you love me,

for it is false. Benedick understands her to mean 'eat your sword,' and that phrase was undoubtedly also in her mind. Cf 2 *Henry IV*, II, 2, 147-150 'Poins. I'll steep this letter in sack and make him eat it. *Prince* That's to make him eat twenty of his words.' In the old play of *George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*, I, 2 (Greene, ed Collins, II, 186, 187), Mannering, who brings a commission from the Earl of Kendal, is forced by George to eat the seals that are on the document. 'Eate them, or eate my daggers poynt, proud squire.' There is a similar incident in *Sir John Oldcastle*, 1600 (Malone Society ed, II, 561 ff.). See Albright, *Modern Language Notes*, XXX (1915), 201-206

278, 279. I will make him eat it: i.e., eat my sword To 'make a man eat one's sword' was a grotesque idiom for to 'force him to submit or be killed.' Cf 1 *Henry IV*, v, 4, 155-157. 'If the man were alive and would deny it, zounds! I would make him eat a piece of my sword'; 2 *Henry VI*, iv, 10, 30-32: 'I'll make thee eat iron like an ostridge and swallow my sword like a great pin ere thou and I part', *Troilus and Cressida*, II, 3, 227: 'A should not bear it so, 'a should eat swords first.'

283 God forgive me! i.e., for being so bold as to declare my love.

285. You have stayed me in a happy hour: You have interrupted me at an opportune moment—for I was about to be so forthputting as to declare that I loved you.

293. me. Emphatic—to deny it: by refusing to kill him.

295 I am gone: I am gone from you; I give you up.—though I am here: though you are holding me here and will not let me depart.

303-306. approv'd: proved to be. Cf. I. 45.—bear her in hand: delude her. The phrase implies not merely a single act but a systematic course of deception. Cf. *Hamlet*, II, 2, 65-67.—uncover'd: outspoken.

311. a proper saying! a fine thing to say! a likely story!

315. undone: ruined.

317-324 **Counties!** Counts!—a goodly count. A bitter pun 'A handsome count and a fine story.' Grant White quotes Guazzo, *The Civile Conuersation*, 1586, fol. 6 v^o: 'comptes which are vsed to be told by the fire side'—**Comfect:** Comfit, Sweetmeat.—**for his sake:** i.e., that I might take vengeance on him—**would be:** who would be.—**cursies:** curtsies.—**only.** The implication is that men dare not fight in support of what they say.—**trim ones too:** fine tongues; fine talkers.

334-336. **I am engag'd:** I pledge myself—**Claudio shall render me a dear account:** I will call Claudio to account and make him pay dear for his offence.

Scene II

In this scene in the Quartos and the Folios most of the speeches of Dogberry are assigned to 'Kemp' and all but one of the speeches of Verges to 'Cowley' (or 'Couley'). William Kempe was the leading comic actor in Shakespeare's company. We know from a stage direction in the Second and Third Quartos of *Romeo and Juliet* (iv, 5) that he took the rôle of Peter in that play. Richard Cowley was another member of the same company.

1 **dissembly.** For 'assembly.'

2. **a cushion.** Wilson thinks that the cushion was to serve as a lap-tablet since the Sexton (who is also Town Clerk) was to take notes of the examination. He calls attention to the bust of Shakespeare in the church at Stratford, which shows a cushion used for such a purpose. But probably Verges merely wishes to accommodate the Town Clerk with a dignified and comfortable seat. Malone cites Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, iv, 3, 16 (ed. Boas, p. 89): 'Bring a chaire and a cushion for the King'

5. **the exhibition:** the commission.

15. **sirrah:** fellow. *Sirrah* is a form of *sir*, often used in addressing an inferior or to express contempt or anger. Conrade resents Dogberry's use of the term

17. **Masters.** Regularly used in respectful address, like the modern 'gentlemen.' Perhaps Dogberry has been impressed by Conrade's dignified answer; but it is unsafe to interpret his mental and linguistic capers.

22. **defend:** forbid.

26. **we are none.** An emphatic denial: 'we are nothing of the kind.'

27-29. **witty:** clever, sharp.—**go about with him:** manage him.

33. **they are both in a tale:** they both tell one and the same story.

38. **marry:** to be sure.—**eftest:** easiest, most convenient, quickest. The word is unknown elsewhere.

55, 56. **upon his words:** because of Borachio's story. For this causal use of *upon* cf. l. 64; ii, 3, 219, note

58. **redemption:** for 'damnation.'

64. **refus'd:** cast off (by Claudio). Cf iv, 1, 185.

69. **opinion'd:** for 'pinioned.' To *pinion* a man is to tie his hands behind his back, or to tie his elbows together behind him

71. **coxcomb:** fool. Jesters wore in the cap a piece of red flannel imitating the comb of a cock. See *King Lear*, i, 4, 105 ff.

72. **God's my life.** A common exclamation: 'God save my life' used much like our 'Bless my soul'

73, 74. **naughty:** wicked. Cf v, 1, 306; *King Lear*, iii, 7, 37: 'Naughty lady.' A strong adjective in Shakespeare's time—not, as now-a-days, degraded to the language of the nursery or of mild humour.—**varlet:** fellow, scamp.

76. **suspect:** for 'respect'

77. **he:** the Sexton, who has just gone out.

82, 83. **as pretty . . . in Messina.** Rolfe compares *Twelfth Night*, i, 5, 30, 31: 'thou wert as witty a piece of Eve's flesh as any in Illyria.'

84, 85. **go to!** See i, 1, 202, note.—**that hath had losses.** For a man who is still well-to-do to speak of his losses with a degree of self-complacency is a rather customary trick of human nature

ACT V Scene I

2. **to second grief:** to give way to grief and thus to aid and abet its effect upon you.

7. **whose . . . mine:** whose misfortunes are comparable to mine.

9. **Whose . . . mine:** and whose delight in having her for his daughter has been so annihilated by losing her.

10. **patience:** self-control.

12 **let it answer every strain for strain:** let his sorrow match my sorrow in every point—feature for feature, trait for trait. The idea is fully expressed in l. 14.

15, 16. **smile and stroke his beard:** like an aged philosopher.—**wag:** be off; go its way. See Textual Notes—**cry 'hem':** calmly clear his throat. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, 1, 3, 165, 166:

Now play me Nestor Hem, and stroke thy beard,
As he being dress'd to [i.e., about to deliver] some oration

17-19. **Patch grief with proverbs:** mend his grief by reciting scraps of proverbial wisdom. Such 'wise saws' exist in abundance: 'What can't be cured must be endured'; 'The darkest hour is before the dawn', 'When bale is highest, boot [i.e., amendment, help] is nighest'; 'He that is down need fear no fall (*Qui iacet in terra non habet unde cadat*). Compare Edgar's elaboration of this kind of reflection in *King Lear*, iv, 1, 1-9.—**make misfortune drunk With candle-wasters:** stupefy his sorrow by means of precepts derived from philosophers who spend the night hours in composing stoical treatises.—**yet.** Emphatic: 'after all'; 'even now, when I am overwhelmed with grief.'—**of him:** from him.

22-24. **tasting it:** when they actually *feel* grief—**turns to passion:** is transformed to passionate sorrow.—**which before . . . to rage:** which—before they felt any sorrow themselves—undertook to cure the intensity of others' grief by mere consolatory precepts.

26. **with air.** Cf. *Hamlet*, III, 4, 197: 'if words be made of breath'

27-31. **all men's office:** everybody's service, something anybody and everybody is ready and able to do —**wring:** are wringing. Rolfe compares *Cymbeline*, III, 6, 79 'He wrings at some distress' —**But no man's virtue nor sufficiency . . . himself:** but no one has the strength or the ability to moralize in that fashion when he is doomed to suffer such sorrow himself.

32. **cry louder than advertisement:** are too intense to be pacified by mere advice

37, 38 **However:** no matter how godlike (and therefore superior to humanity) is the way in which they have expressed themselves in their writings.—**made a push at . . . sufferance:** met misfortune and suffering with defiant courage. A *push* is an 'attack,' an 'onset.' Cf. *Julius Caesar*, V, 2, 5: 'Sudden push gives them the overthrow'; 'stand the push' (1 *Henry IV*, III, 2, 66). *Push*, however, occurs often as a form of the interjection *push!*, and to *make a push at* is an old idiom for to 'scoff at,' 'make light of.' This interpretation, though much in favour with recent editors, seems less probable. Rowe changed *push* to *push* in his second edition (1714) —**sufferance:** suffering.

39. **bend:** direct.—**upon:** against.

45. **comes.** A singular verb with two subjects is especially common when the verb comes first.

46 **Good den:** good even, good afternoon. Cf. III, 2, 84

49. **all is one:** no matter; it makes no difference.

51. **right himself:** restore himself to a condition of happiness. Claudio's question in l. 52 shows that he does not understand Antonio's meaning

55. **bespew:** a mild word for 'curse.'

57 **meant nothing to my sword.** Leonato's excitement had caused Claudio instinctively to lay his hand upon his sword. He now disclaims any hostile intention: 'My hand conveyed no meaning to my sword—did not suggest to my sword that I intended to draw it.'

58 **flee:** jeer.

60. As . . . brag: as if I were using the privilege which old men enjoy.

62. to thy head: as a direct challenge to thee. Wright compares *Midsummer Night's Dream*, i, 1, 106: 'I'll avouch it to his head,' i.e., 'I'll prove it to his face.' This is, in effect, to offer to prove one's assertion by a judicial combat—a 'wager of battle.' Cf. *Richard II*, i, 3, *King Lear*, v, 3, 107 ff

64. to lay my reverence by: to renounce the right which the customary respect for old age gives me—namely, the privilege of exemption from fighting duels.

66. to trial of a man: to a test of strength and valour.

75, 76. his nice fence: his dexterity in fencing.—lusthood: vigour.

78. daff me? put me aside? The same word as *doff*. Cf. ii, 3, 176.

82. Win me and wear me! 'Win it and wear it' was a common phrase, used either to call a man to action or to intimate that he cannot get the desired object without a contest: 'Win it and it shall be yours to enjoy.' Antonio applies the saying as a challenge. 'Overcome me, and I will submit to be your humble servant'; 'Come on, and let the best man win!' Cf. Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, ii (ed. Dyce, I, 281).

Lodowick. This is thy diamond; tell me, shall I have it?
Barabas Win it, and wear it,

Jonson, *The Alchemist*, iv, 3, 321, 322 (Yale ed., p. 199); Fletcher, *The Humorous Lieutenant*, iii, 7 (ed. Dyce, VI, 488), Chapman, *May Day* (Pearson ed., II, 391): 'Winne her and weare her'; Fletcher, *The Woman's Prize*, iv, 4 (ed. Dyce, VII, 185). 'I tell you, I'll no bargains; win and wear it', *Grim*, *The Collier of Croydon*, ii (Collier's Dodsley, XI, 205): 'Win her, and wear her, man, with all my heart!' See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, p. 688; Tilley, *Elizabethan Proverb Lore*, p. 326.—answer me: meet me in response to my challenge. Me is emphatic.

84. I'll whip you from your foining fence! I'll parry your

fencing thrusts with a whip! That will be a sufficient weapon to use against a youngster like you. A *foin* is a 'thrust.' Cf. *King Lear*, iv, 6, 250, 251. 'Come! no matter vor your foins.'

87. **Content yourself:** Be quiet and let me alone.

89-91. **answer a man indeed:** stand their ground in opposition to a real man—**Jacks:** good-for-nothing fellows Cf. i, 1, 184.

94-99 **Scambling:** quarrelsome.—**outfacing:** impudent.—**fashion-monging:** foppish. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, ii, 4, 34 'these fashion-mongers.'—**cog:** cheat—**flout:** jeer. Cf. i, 1, 184.—**deprave and slander.** Synonymous—**Go anticly:** swagger in fantastic attire—**this is all:** this is all there is to them; this is the whole story

100, 101. **'tis no matter:** this is nothing that you need worry about—**let me deal in this:** let me manage this affair

102. **we will not wake your patience:** we do not wish to disturb your serenity, i.e., to irritate you Cf. *Richard II*, i, 3, 132: 'to wake our peace.'

109 **shall:** you shall be heard.

113, 114 **You are . . . a fray:** You arrive just too late to keep the peace in what was almost a brawl

115, 116. **We had lik'd to have had:** We were likely to have; we seemed to be on the point of having—**with:** by.

119 **I doubt:** I suspect; I rather think.

120. **a false quarrel:** a quarrel in which the right is not on one's side

122-124. **We have been up and down:** We have been everywhere—hither and yon—**high-proof:** 'in the highest degree' (Wright).—**fain:** gladly—**wit:** cleverness in talk.

127, 128 **beside their wit:** out of their wits; out of their minds.—**draw.** Claudio puns on drawing one's wit (as if it were a sword) and drawing the bow (of a fiddle).

132, 133. **care kill'd a cat:** even a *cat*. A proverbial phrase. Cf. *Shirburn Ballads*, ed. Clark, p. 91:

- Let care kill a catte;
Wee'le laugh and be fatte.

Cats, since they have nine lives, are hard to kill. See *Romeo and Juliet*, iii, 1, 80, 81. Cf. John Taylor, *Et Curo* (*Works*, 1630, Spenser Society ed., p. 216):

For long agoe I doe remember that
There was a Prouerb, *Care* will kill a *Cat*.
And it is said, a Cat's a wondrous beast,
And that she hath in her nine lues at least
.

But if *Care* of such potent power be,
To kill nine lues, it may kill one in me

—**mettle**: vivacity: liveliness of mind.

136, 137. **in the career**: at full speed.—**an you charge it against me**: if you come charging on with it in an attack on me. The figures come from single combat on horseback in battle or tournament.

138, 139. **another staff**. Claudio continues the tournament metaphor. *Another staff* may mean 'another shaft for his lance' or, perhaps, 'another lance'; but probably Claudio implies that this contest of wit is merely a mock tournament, in which poles are used instead of pointed lances—**this last was broke cross**: this last witticism of his was a complete failure—**cross**: across, crosswise. A passage from *Ivanhoe*, Chap. ix (noted by Nares) is the best comment: 'The antagonist of Grantmesnil, instead of bearing his lance-point fair against the crest or the shield of his enemy, swerved so much from the direct line as to break the weapon athwart the person of his opponent—a circumstance which was accounted more disgraceful than that of being actually unhorsed; because the latter might happen from accident, whereas the former evinced awkwardness and want of management of the weapon and of the horse.'

140, 141. **By this light**. A trivial oath 'by the light of day.' Cf. v, 4, 92; *Tempest*, ii, 2, 154; iii, 2, 18.—**be**. The subjunctive in indirect discourse. See iii, 3, 89, note.

142. **to turn his girdle**: 'If you are angry, you may turn your girdle' (or 'you may turn the buckle of your girdle behind you') is old conventional phrase which seems to mean 'You may

remain angry, for aught I care, until you see fit to change your mind.' It implies that the speaker feels no concern about the matter. Halliwell cites Swift, *Polite Conversation* (ed. Scott², IX, 427) 'Mr. Neverout, if miss will be angry for nothing, take my counsel, and bid her turn the buckle of her girdle behind her.'

147-148. **how:** in whatsoever way — **with what:** with whatsoever weapons. — **Do me right:** Accept my challenge. — **protest your cowardice:** proclaim the fact that you are a coward.

152 **so I may have good cheer:** provided I may count on good fare. Claudio speaks as if he had been invited to a feast. He can hardly take Benedick's challenge seriously.

154-158. **bid me:** invited me — **to a calve's head:** to a duel with a foolish fellow. For the form *calve's* cf. 'knife's' (II, 3, 263). — **curiously:** elaborately, skilfully — **naught:** good for nothing — **find:** i.e., as part of the bill of fare. — **a woodcock.** Claudio is at a loss to understand Benedick's anger. The woodcock (though in fact an intelligent bird) was regarded as particularly stupid; it was even thought to have no brains. Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, I, 2, 161. 'O this woodcock, what an ass it is!' See *Hamlet*, I, 3, 115; V, 2, 317.

159 ff. They are still at cross purposes. Claudio cannot understand why he has been challenged; Don Pedro, who cannot imagine that Benedick is serious, continues in a jesting vein, with intent to further the projected match between Beatrice and Benedick, and Claudio goes on in the same tenour.

162-174. **a great gross one:** a great one, if by 'great' you mean 'coarse,' 'stupid.' — **Just:** just so; quite right. — **a wise gentleman:** wise enough for a *gentleman*. Spoken with ironical emphasis: 'No doubt he has all the wisdom we can expect of a *gentleman*!' — **he hath the tongues:** he is well versed in foreign languages — **forswore:** denied with an oath. — **double:** deceitful. — **thy particular:** thy own personal. — **proper'st:** handsomest.

178, 179. **an if . . . dearly.** Don Pedro has in mind the old saying about women: 'Aut amat aut odit mulier: nil est tertium' (Publilius Syrus, l. 6). Cf. Lyly, *Euphues* (ed. Bond, I, 238):

I haue hearde that women eyther loue entirely or hate deadly.' See Tilley, *Elizabethan Proverb Lore*, p. 333.

181, 182. **God saw him . . . garden.** See *Genesis*, iii, 8. Benedick is too angry to see the point.

183, 184. **When . . . head?** When shall we see Benedick married? Once more the everlasting jest about the cuckold's horns. See i, 1, 263, and note

185. **Yea, and text underneath:** Yes, and when shall we write, 'in great letters' under his picture, . . . Claudio is echoing Benedick's defiant words in i, 1, 266 ff.: 'Let me be vilely painted, and in such great letters as they write "Here is good horse to hire," let them signify under my sign "Here you may see Benedick the married man."' "

187-195. **you know my mind:** You know what I think of you, and what I am ready to do in order to prove that I am right in my opinion. See ll. 146 ff.—**I will leave you . . . humour:** I'll leave you to the enjoyment of your whimsical frame of mind, which is about as sensible as that of a chattering old woman.—**break jests:** make jokes at other persons' expense.—**as braggarts do their blades:** i.e., in sham fights, undertaken merely to show off and involving no danger.—**For:** as for.—**my Lord Lackbeard.** Cf. Antonio's 'sir boy' (i. 83).—**meet:** in a duel (for I have challenged him).

200. **hath challeng'd thee.** Don Pedro did not hear what Benedick said to Claudio in ll. 146-151.

202-204. **What . . . wit!** What a figure a man makes when he walks about in his ordinary attire but has neglected to put on his common sense along with his clothes!

205, 206. **He is then a giant to an ape:** Then (when he has forgotten to put on his wits along with his clothes) he is, no doubt, a giant in stature in comparison with an ape; but, to tell the truth, an ape—silly creature as he is—is a wise man in comparison with such a fellow.—**a doctor:** a learned scholar.

208, 209. **soft you:** literally, 'go slow,' 'don't be in a hurry.'—**Pluck up, my heart, and be sad!** Pull up, my dear fellow, and be serious. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, v, 5, 50: 'I speak to thee, my heart!'

The plural, *my hearts*, is common in this sense: see *Tempest*, i, 1, 5; *Merry Wives*, iii, 2, 88

210. *she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance*: she will nevermore be able to weigh law cases in her scales. Dogberry misuses *reasons* (which often means 'causes') in the sense of 'cases at law.' Cf. 2 *Henry VI*, ii, 1, 204: 'And poise the cause in justice' equal scales.'

212, 213. *a cursing hypocrite*. Dogberry seems to mean 'a lying impostor.'

223. *verified*: asserted as true.

226. *committed*: arrested and held for trial.

230, 231. *division*: method of dividing up and arranging the subject matter.—*one meaning well suited*: one single idea dressed up in becoming terms. Don Pedro has 'asked the question in four modes of speech' (Johnson).

232-234. *Who*. Good Elizabethan grammar.—*masters*: sirs. Cf. iv, 2, 17.—*too cunning*: too subtle in his language.

236-249. *Sweet*. See iv, 1, 31, note.—*let me go no farther to mine answer*: Let me confess and be punished here and now. *Answer* is used in two senses: (1) answer to your question and (2) answering for my crime (paying the penalty).—*wisdoms*. For this use of a plural see iii, 1, 114, note.—*incensed*: incited, instigated.—*orchard*: garden.—*when you should marry her*: when you were to marry her. For *should* cf. l. 300.—*upon*: as the result of. Cf. l. 257; ii, 3, 219, note

255. *for the practice of it*: for forming and carrying out the plot.

256 *compos'd and fram'd*. Synonymous.

260. *that*: in which.

261. *plaintiffs*: for 'defendants.'

262 *reformed*: for 'informed'

279. *'Twas bravely done*: It was a magnificent act.

280. *to pray your patience*: to beg you to hear me calmly. *Patience* is a trisyllable here

282 *Impose me to*: appoint me to; sentence me to.

290 *Possess*: inform

293 epitaph. See iv, 1, 208.

299 she alone is heir to both of us. But, as a matter of fact, Antonio has a son (see i, 2). The inconsistency is not explained by supposing that Leonato's statement is 'part of his fiction', for that son is not away from home, and Leonato's guests must have made his acquaintance already.

300. should have giv'n: were to give Cf. l. 246.

303. dispose. Not 'I dispose' but 'dispose you' (imperative). 'I am your humble servant to dispose of as you will.'

306. naughty. See iv, 2, 74, note.

308. pack'd in all this wrong: an accomplice in this whole conspiracy. *Packing* is a synonym for 'plotting.' Cf. *King Lear*, iii, 1, 26.

311, 312. just: good, righteous —by her: about her.

313-321. not under white and black: not 'written down' in black and white See iv, 2, 79.—a key. Doubtless the 'lock' (iii, 3, 183) suggested the key to Dogberry's logical mind.—borrows money in God's name: like a beggar, who asks alms 'for God's sake.' Halliwell quotes Percivale's *Dictionary*, ed. Minshew, 1599, p 193: 'Pordioséros, men that aske for Gods sake, beggers.'—the which . . . so long: which habit he has so long practised —nothing: i e , either to him or to anybody.

324. reverent. Probably Dogberry actually means 'reverent,' though the word is very common in the sense of 'reverend.'

327-333. God save the foundation! 'Such was the customary phrase employed by those who received alms at the gates of religious houses' (Steevens). It was really a prayer for the soul of the founder of the house and for God's blessing on the establishment. Deighton compares Middleton, *More Dissemblers besides Women*, v, 1, 101 (ed. Bullen, VI, 463): 'Marry, pray for the founder.'—I discharge thee of thy prisoner: I free thee from further responsibility for him. Leonato, being a magistrate, takes charge of the prisoner.—which: whom.—keep: guard, protect.—if . . . prohibit it! Doubtless he means, 'God grant we may meet again on a more cheerful occasion'

341 lewd. In the old general sense 'low,' 'disreputable.'

Scene II

7 come over it. There is an obvious pun on *style* and *stile*. Cf. Chaucer, *Squire's Tale*, ll. 97, 98 (cited by J. C. Smith)

Al be it that I kan not sowne his style,
Ne kan not clymben over so heigh a stile

for . . . **deservest it:** for only the most exalted style can do justice to thy beauty—can describe it as it actually is.

10 **keep below stairs:** remain down stairs—in the servants' quarters.

13. **blunt . . . foils.** Fencing foils were blunted but had no button on the point. Cf. *Hamlet*, iv, 7, 139; v, 2, 328.

18 I give thee the bucklers: I yield; I lay aside all thoughts of defence. The *buckler* was a kind of shield.

20, 21. **the pikes.** A buckler had a pointed spike in the centre—a vice: a screw.

26. **The God of love, etc.** The beginning of a song by William Elderton, a popular ballad-writer of Shakespeare's time. See Rollins, *Studies in Philology*, XVII (1920), 203 ff., and cf. his edition of Clement Robinson's *Handful of Pleasant Delights*, pp. 42, 101, 102.

29. **How pitiful I deserve.** This means 'How much I deserve pity (for my unrequited affection)'; but Benedick interprets it in the sense of 'How slight my deserts are' and protests that, though he may be without merit as a singer, he is the greatest lover on record.

30. **Leander.** Cf. *Two Gentlemen*, i, 1, 21, 22; iii, 1, 117-120, *As You Like It*, iv, 1, 99. A verse from Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* is quoted by Phebe in *As You Like It*, iii, 5, 82: 'Who ever lov'd that lov'd not at first sight?'

31. **panders.** The word is derived from the name of Pandarus. Compare his speech in *Troilus and Cressida*, iii, 2, 206 ff.: 'If ever you prove false one to another, since I have taken such pain to bring you together, let all pitiful goers-

between be call'd to the world's end after my name; call them all Pandars. Let all constant men be Troiluses, all false women Cressids, and all brokers-between Pandars!

32-36. **quondam**: ancient.—**carpet-mongers**. *Carpet knight* is an old satirical term for one who has been dubbed knight without having done military service. Such is Sir Andrew Aguecheek in *Twelfth Night* (iii, 4, 257, 258). Benedick applies a similar term to all the famous lovers of antiquity, for, he asserts, they were only triflers in comparison with himself.—**Marry**: to be sure; true enough. See i, 3, 51, note.—**I cannot show it in rhyme**. Compare Hamlet's love verses (ii, 2, 116 ff.), for which he apologizes: 'O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers, I have not the art to reckon my groans.' Orlando's love poem to Rosalind is ridiculed and parodied by Touchstone (*As You Like It*, iii, 2, 93 ff.)—**innocent**: childish.

40, 41. **nor I cannot**. Cf. ii, 1, 132, note.

47 **with that**: with that which.

50. **thereupon**: on account of that—i.e., I claim a kiss as my reward for challenging him. See iv, 1, 290 ff.

54-61. **his right sense**: its proper meaning. The pun on *sense* is obvious.—**undergoes**: has been subjected to—**subscribe him a coward**: 'post' him in some public place as a coward (with my signature attached to the notice). Cf. v, 1, 148—**parts**: qualities.

62, 63. **maintain'd . . . evil**: maintain'd so well organized a condition of badness. The use of *politic* shows that there is a shadowy pun on *state* in the sense of 'a political organization.'

67. **epithet**: phrase.

70 **In spite of**. Beatrice puns on the two meanings of the phrase.

76. **It appears not in this confession**: This declaration—that you are wise—does not show wisdom, for self-praise is not a wise man's habit. 'Self-praise goes but little ways' is a proverb that may still be heard in New England.—**confession**. Used as in the phrase 'confession of faith.'

78. **old instance . . . neighbours**: That maxim about self-

praise that you quote is an obsolete doctrine. It was current—and had some truth in it—in the good old times, when a man's neighbours were ready to commend his good qualities. For instance cf. *As You Like It*, II, 7, 156: 'wise saws and modern instances.'

81. **live no longer in monument**: have no monument that shall keep his memory alive

84-89. **Question**: 'A problem,' says Benedick, 'but an easy one to solve.'—**clamour**: the mournful sound of the bell.—**rheum**: tears—**Don Worm (his conscience)**. Cf. *Richard III*, I, 3, 222: 'The worm of conscience still begnaw thy soul' Chaucer, *The Physician's Tale*, C 280. 'The worm of conscience may agryse' [i.e., be terrified]. Wright cites *Mark*, IX, 48. 'Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.'—**trumpet**: trumpeter.—**virtues**: fine qualities.

95 **mend**: recover from your illness. Benedick implies that his prescription ('Serve God, love me') will effect a rapid recovery.—**There will I leave you too**: With that advice I'll say good-bye.

97-102. **old coil**: a great hubbub. *Old* was in colloquial use as a mere intensive: as 'old swearing' for 'hard swearing' (*Merchant of Venice*, IV, 2, 15); 'old tumbling' (Fletcher, *The Pilgrim*, III, 7); 'old turning the key' (*Macbeth*, II, 3, 2); 'old utis' for 'a high old time' (2 *Henry IV*, II, 4, 21)—**abus'd**: deceived.—**presently**: immediately. Cf. I, 1, 88

Scene III

7 **with**: because of.

10 **when I am dumb**: when I am dead and can praise her no longer. The Quarto reads 'dead' but the Folio has 'dumbe.'

12, 13 **goddess of the night**: Diana, the moon goddess and the patron deity of maidens.—**thy virgin knight**. Cf. *All's Well*, I, 3, 119, 120: 'Dian no queen of virgins, that would suffer her poor knight surpris'd.'

18, 20. **heavily**: mournfully—**yield your dead . . . uttered**: release your dead that they may join with us in our mourning until her death has been lamented to the full.

25-27. **The wolves have prey'd**: have finished their prowling, since dawn is at hand. Cf. 2 *Henry VI*, iv, 1, 3, 4:

And now loud-howling wolves arouse the jades
That drag the tragic melancholy night

—**Dapples . . . spots of grey**. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, ii, 3, 1-4:

The grey-ey'd morn smiles on the frowning night,
Check'ring the Eastern clouds with streaks of light;
And flecked darkness like a drunkard reels
From forth day's path and Titan's fiery wheels.

30. **weeds**: garments.

32, 33. **Hymen . . . woe**: A marriage is now at hand which is to have a more fortunate outcome than hers for whom we are here mourning. For *speeds* many editors adopt Thirlby's conjecture, *speed's*, i.e., speed us: 'May the god of marriage prosper us.'

. Scene IV

3 **Upon**: because of. See ii, 3, 219, note.

4-6. **in some fault**: somewhat to blame—**against her will**: 'unintentionally' (Trenery).—**question**: investigation.

7 **sort**: come out, result

8 **faith**: fidelity to my promise. See iv, 1, 334 ff.

14 **your office**: your duty, the part you have to act.

17. **with confirm'd countenance**: with steadfast looks and demeanour. *Countenance* often means 'bearing,' 'behaviour.' It is not confined to 'expression of the face.'

20. **undo**: ruin—with an obvious pun.

25, 26. **The sight . . . Prince**. Since his love, Leonato thinks, was the result of his overhearing the conversation in ii, 3, 92 ff.

28 **for:** as for

29. **stand with:** agree with

30. **marriage.** Trisyllabic.

34. **assembly.** A quadrisyllable.

36. **yet:** still.

41. **a February face.** 'Although well pleased that he is no longer required to call his old friend to account, Benedick takes care to show, by his coldness and reserve, that he considers their behaviour to have been unjustifiable, even had the story been true which Don John had beguiled them into believing' (Lady Martin, *On Some of Shakespeare's Female Characters*, ed. 1891, p. 409).

43 **the savage bull.** See 1, 1, 263-270.

45. **Europa:** Europe

46, 47. The tale of Jupiter and Europa was one of the most popular of all mythological love-stories. Shakespeare of course read it in Ovid when he was a schoolboy (*Metamorphoses*, II, 833 ff.). Compare Falstaff's soliloquy when he enters disguised as Herne the Hunter 'with a buck's head upon him' (*Merry Wives*, v, 5, 3 ff.): 'Remember, Jove, thou wast a bull for thy Europa; love set on thy horns. O powerful love, that in some respects makes a beast a man; in some other, a man a beast!'

52. **For this I owe you. Here comes 'other reck'nings:** I must postpone the payment of that gibe of yours. Here come other accounts that I must settle first.

59. **like of me:** like me; are satisfied to take me.

63. **defil'd:** disgraced.

67-71. **amazement.** A very strong word: 'all this stupefying maze of wonder in which you find yourself.'—**qualify:** modify, lessen, relieve—**after that:** after. *That* is often added to particles and relative adverbs—*if that, since that, when that*, etc.—**largely:** in full.—**let wonder seem familiar:** treat all these marvels as if they were ordinary matters; do not let them disturb you. *Familiar* is quadrisyllabic—**presently:** at once.

72. **Soft and fair:** Wait a moment,—literally, Go slowly and easily. Cf. v, 1, 208.

77. **Troth:** by my faith.

82. **no such matter:** nothing of the kind. Cf. i, 1, 191.

83. **but . . . recompense:** only as a friend loves a friend.

84. **cousin:** niece. See i, 2, 1, note.

87. **halting:** limping. Despite his confessed lack of skill in rhyming (v, 2, 34 ff.), Benedick has so far yielded to custom as to compose a love sonnet, but he has not ventured to show it to Beatrice.—**of his own pure brain:** purely of his own invention.

91, 92. **Here's . . . hearts:** Here is our own handwriting to give evidence to prove our hearts guilty of love.—**by this light.** Cf. v, 1, 140.

95-97. **I would not deny you:** I should not like to refuse you. Cf. i. 1. 114.—**upon:** because of. See ii, 3, 219, note.—**in a consumption:** in a decline—wasting away with lovesickness.

99. **the married man.** See i, 1, 268-270.

100-112. **wit-crackers:** fellows who crack jokes—**flout:** jeer.—**my humour:** my fancy.—**If a man . . . him:** No man who is so weak as to allow mere witticisms to give him a thrashing will ever be able to wear good clothes without having them spoiled by beating.—**I will think nothing to any purpose:** I will regard nothing as of any consequence.—**this is my conclusion:** this is my final purpose.—**in that:** inasmuch as.

116. **a double-dealer.** The pun is complicated, but obvious enough. 'To make thee cease to be a "single man" by forcing thee to marry—and that would make thee a double-dealer, since I am sure thou wilt be an unfaithful husband unless,' etc.

123. **of my word!** on my word!

125, 126 **staff:** walking stick —**reverent:** reverend, worthy of honour. A final joke about the cuckold's horns. Cf. *As You Like It*, iv, 2, 18, 19:

The horn, the horn, the lusty horn,
Is not a thing to laugh to scorn

127, 128. **ta'en in flight.** See v, 2, 99, 100.—**with:** by.

129. **brave:** fine, splendid.

TEXTUAL NOTES

[Q indicates the Quarto (1600) Ff indicates the exact agreement of all four Folios—F₁ (1623), F₂ (1632), F₃ (1664), and F₄ (1685) F₁ without mention of the others indicates agreement of the four except in some detail of spelling. The figures 1 and 2 after an editor's name (as in Rowe₁ and Rowe₂) indicate respectively first and second edition Conjectures are marked 'conj', omissions, 'om']

ACT 1, Scene 1 (Stage direction)] After 'Messina' Q Ff have 'Innogen
[Innogen (F₄)] *his wife*' Cf u, 1 (stage direction)
1 Pedro] Peter (Q), *Peter* (Ff), *Pedro* (Rowe₁)
51 eat (F₃ F₄)] *cate* (Q F₂), *ease* (F₁).
89 Benedick] Benedict (Q F₁), *Benedicke* (F₂), *Benedick* (F₃ F₄)
204 (stage direction)] *Enter don Pedro, Iohn the bastard.* (Q F₁).
311, 312 and . . have her] om Ff.

Scene 2, 7 event (F₂ F₃ F₄)] *euent* (Q F₁)
25 Cousin (Johnson)] *coosins* (Q F₁); *cosins* (F₂ F₃), *cousins* (F₄).
27 skill (Ff)] *shill* (Q).

Scene 3, 41 Enter *Borachio*] After l. 42 in Q Ff
51 brother's] *bothers* (Q); *brothers* (Ff)
56 on (Ff)] *one* (Q)
75 o'] a (Q), of (Ff)

ACT II, Scene 1 (stage direction)] *Enter Leonato, his brother, his wife, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his neece, and a kinsman [and kinsman (F₃ F₄)]*. (Q Ff).

50, 51 Peter—for the heavens He] Peter for the heavens, he (Q), *Peter* for the heauens, hee (F₁); *Peter*, for the heav'ns, he (Pope), *Peter* for the heavens, he (Capell).

86 (stage direction)] *Enter prince, Pedro, Claudio, and Benedicke, and Balthasar, or dumb Iohn.* (Q), *Enter Prince, Pedro, Claudio, and Benedicke, and Balthasar, or dumbe Iohn, Maskers with a drum.* (F₁)

90 a bout (Wilson)] *about* (Q Ff)

103, 107, 110 *Balsh* (Theobald)] *Bene* or *Ben.* (Q Ff).

160 (After 'turning')] *Dance exeunt* (Q), *Excunt* [Excunt (F₂ F₃ F₄)] *Musicke* [Musick (F₃ F₄)] *for the dance* (Ff)

215 the base (though bitter) (Q Ff)] the base, the bitter (Johnson conj; Steevens 1793)

217 (stage direction)] *Enter the Prince, Hero, Leonato, Iohn and Borachio, and Conrade.* (Q), *Enter the Prince* (Ff)

269 follows (F₃ F₄)] *followes* (Q F₁ F₂), *follow* (Pope).

270 (stage direction)] *Leonato, Hero.* (Ff)] om Q

346 o'] a (Q), of (Ff).

355 pleasant-spirited (Theobald)] pleasant spirited (Q Ff)

Scene 2, 41 term me Claudio] terme me Claudio (Q), terme me *Claudio* (F₁), term me *Borachio* (Theobald)

Scene 3, 7 Q Ff mark the exit after 'already, sir' Corrected by Johnson.

22 made an oyster (Ff)] made and oyster (Q)

38 (stage direction) *Music*] *Musicke* (Q), and *lacke Wilson* (F₁)

44 (stage direction)] om Ff

44 kid-fox (F₂ F₄)] kid-foxe (Q F₁ F₂), hid fox (Warburton)

84 live] lue (Q); liefe (F₁), leife (F₂), lieve (F₃ F₄)

90 Q Ff put Balthasar's exit after l 90 Corrected by Capell

141 us of (F₂ F₃ F₄)] of vs (Q); vs of (F₁).

225 (stage direction)] om. Q, *Exeunt* (Ff)

253 Q Ff put the entrance of Beatrice after 'her' (l 255)

263 knive's] knues (Q F₁), knives (F₂ F₃ F₄)

ACT III, Scene 1 (stage direction) *Ursula* (F₃)] *Vrsley* (Q), *Vrsula* (F₂ F₄)

14 *Exit* (F₂ F₃ F₄)] om Q F₁.

23 Enter *Beatrice*] After 'conference,' l 25 (Q), after 'begin,' l 23 (Ff)

45 as full, as (F₂ F₄)] as tull as (Q F₁ F₂), at full, as (Long MS); at full as (Boas)

60 featur'd (Ff)] featured (Q).

63 antic] antique (Q), anticke (F₁ F₂), antuck (F₃ F₄).

104 lim'd] lumed (Q), tane (Ff)

106 (stage direction)] om Q, *Exit* (Ff)

Scene 2, 28 can (Pope)] cannot (Q Ff).

33-35 or doublet] om Ff

41 o' (Theobald)] a (Q Ff).

55 *Pedio.*] *Bene* (Q), *Pim.* (Ff)

61 new-crept (Boas conj, Wilson)] now crept (Q Ff).

117 love her then, to-morrow (Hanmer)] loue her, then to morrow [morow (Q)] (Q F₁).

127 her to-morrow, in] her to morrow in (Q Ff), her to Morrow, in (Rowe).

137 *Exeunt.* (F₂ F₃ F₄)] om Q, *Exit* (F₁).

Scene 3, 39, 48, 52, 57, 71 2. *Watch.*] *Watch* (Q); *Watch.* (Ff), corrected by Rowe

84 statutes (Q)] Statues (F₁); Statutes (F₂ F₃ F₄)

95, 103, 114 2. *Watch*] *Watch* (Q); *Watch.* (Ff), 2 *W* (Capell)

133 2 *Watch*] *Watch* (Q), *Watch* (Ff), 1 *W* (Capell), 2 *Watchman* (Wilson)

176, 182 2. *Watch*] *Watch* 1 (Q), *Watch* 1 (Ff), 2 *Watchman*. (Wilson)

177 1 *Watch*] *Watch* 2 (Q), *Watch* 2 (Ff), 1 *Watchman*. (Wilson).

185 1 *Watch*] *Watch* 2 (Q), *Watch* 2 (Ff)

187, 188 *Conr Masters*—2 *Watch Never*] *Conr Masters*, neuer (Q); *Conr Masters*, neuer (F₁), *Conr Masters*,—1 *Watch Never* (Theobald).

Scene 4, 18 in (Ff)] it (Q)

19–22 pearls tinsel] pearles, downe sleeues, side sleeues, and skirts, round vnderborne with a blewish tinsel, (Q), pearles, downe sleeues, side sleeues, and skirts, round vnderborn with a blewish tinsel, (F₁), pearles, downe sleeves, side sleeves, and skirts, round underborn with a blewish tinsel, (F₂), pearls down-sleeves, side-sleeves, and skirts, round, underborn with a blewish tinsel, (F₂ F₄), pearls, down sleeves, side sleeves, and skirts round, under-born with a blueish tinsel (Capell)

45 o'] a (Q Ff), o' (Rowe₂)

47 Yea, 'Light o' love'] Ye Light aloue (Q F₁), Ye light alove (F₂ F₃ F₄); Yes light a love (Rowe₁), Yes light o' love (Rowe₂), Yes, *Light o' love* (Capell); Yea, *Light o' love* (Capell conj, Steevens 1778).

52 o'clock (Theobald)] a clocke (Q F₁).

Scene 5, 10 off (Capell conj; Steevens)] of (Q Ff)

27 pound (Q)] tunes (Ff)

61 Q Ff mark Leonato's exit after 'well' (l 58). Corrected by Rowe.

69 *Exeunt*. (Ff)] om Q

Act IV, Scene 1, 23 ah (Q)] ha (Ff)

54 show'd] shewed (Q Ff)

57 the seeming! (Knight)] thee seeming, (Q Ff); thy seeming, (Pope), thee, seeming! (Collier), thee! seeming! (E. H. Seymour conj, *Remarks upon the Plays of Shakespeare*, 1805, I, 77).

96 nam'd] named (Q Ff)

97 spoke (Q)] spoken (Ff)

134 smirched (Q)] smeered (F₁ F₂ F₃), smear'd (F₄)

149 No, truly not, although] No truly, not although (Q); No truly. not although (F₁), No truly not, although (F₂ F₃), No truly not, although (F₄)

166 observation (Hanmer)] obseruations (Q F₁).

203 the princes left for dead] the princess (left for dead,) (Q); the Princess (left for dead) (F₁), the Princes left for dead (Theobald).

229 moving, delicate, and (F₂ F₃ F₄)] mouuing delicate, and (Q); mouing delicate, and (F₁); moving-delicate, and (Capell).

- 255 (stage direction)] *exit* (Q), *Exit* (F₁), *Exit* (F₂ F₃ F₄)
 277 swear, and] swear and (Q), swear [swear (F₃ F₄)] by it and (Ff)
 316 Beat—] Beat? (Q F₁), Bett? (F₂ F₃), But? (F₄), *Beat*— (Theobald)
 338 *Exeunt*. (F₂ F₃ F₄)] om Q F₁

Scene 2 *Enter the Constables, Borachio, and the Towne cleerke in gownes* (Q), *Enter the Constables, Borachio, and the Towne Cleerke in gownes* (F₁)

- 1 *Dog*. (Capell)] *Keeper* (Q), *Keeper* (Ff)
 2, 5 *Verg*] *Cowley* (Q), *Cowley* (F₁ F₂ F₃), *Cowly* (F₄), *Ver* (Capell)
 4 *Dog*. (Capell)] *Andrew* (Q), *Andrew* (Ff)
 10, 15, etc. *Dog*. (Capell)] *Kemp* or *Kem* or *Kee*. or *Ke*. or *Keep* (Q Ff).
 19-22 *Both* villains! om Ff
 30 ear Sir, I] ear sir, I (Q F₁ F₂), ear sir, I (F₃); ear sir; I (F₄)
 38 eetest (Q Ff)] easiest (Rowe), deffest (Theobald), eetest [i.e., pleasantest] (Wilson conj)
 53 th' mass (F₄)] masse (Q), th' masse (F₁ F₂ F₃).
 61 *Watchmen*] *Watch* (Q), *Watch* (Ff)
 70, 71 *Verg* Let them be in the hands—*Con* Off, coxcomb! *Couley*
 Let them be in the hands of Coxcombe (Q), *Sex* [*Sext* (F₂ F₄)] Let them be in the hands of Coxcombe [*Coxombe* (F₂), *Coxcomb* (F₃ F₄)] (Ff), *Sexton* Let them be in hand *Exit* *Con* Off, Coxcomb! (Warburton); *Ver* Let them be in bands *Con* Off, coxcomb! (Capell); *Ver* Let them be in the hands of—*Con* Coxcomb! (Malone conj); Let them be, in the hands *Con* Off, coxcomb! (Brae)
 75 *Con* (Capell)] *Couley* (Q), *Couley* (F₁ F₂ F₃), *Cowley* (F₄), *Conr*. (Pope)

Act v, Scene 1, 6 comforter (Q)] comfort (F₁); comfort els (F₂), comfort else (F₃ F₄)

- 10 speak to me (Hanmer)] speake (Q F₁ F₂), speak (F₃ F₄)
 16 Bid sorrow wag, cry 'hem' And sorrow, wagge, crie hem, (Q F₁ F₂), And hallow, wag, cry hem, (F₂); And hollow, wag, cry hem, (F₄), Bid sorrow, wag; cry, hem! (Capell), And, sorry wag^d cry, hem! (Steevens conj 1778; withdrawn), And—sorry wag—cry 'hem' (Wilson).
 38 a push (Q Ff)] a pish (Rowe₂), a push! (Collier₂), a 'push' (Wilson).
 94 fashion-monging (Q F₂)] fashion-mongring (F₂ F₃ F₄).
 96 show (Dyce₂) and shew (Q), and show (Ff).
 97 off (Theobald, Warburton)] of (Q Ff)
 109 *Exeunt ambo*] Q Ff Rowe₁ put this exit after 'heard' (l. 108).
 Corrected by Rowe₂.

109 Enter *Benedick*] His entrance is marked after 'for it' (l 109) in Q, after 'hear you' (l 107) in Ft

115 lik'd] likt (Q F₁), like (F₂ F₃ F₄)

123 high-proof (Theobald)] high proofe (Q F₁ F₂ F₄), high proof (F₄).

183 on (Ff)] one (Q)

334 *Exeunt Dogberry and Verges* (Clark and Wright)] om Q, *Exeunt* [Exeun (F₄)] (Ff after 'farewell,' l 335), after 'neighbour' (Rowe).

Scene 2, 9, 10 over me? . . stairs?] ouer me, why shal I alwaies keepe below staieres? (F₁), over me, [me, (F₄)] why, shall I alwaies [alwayes (F₂), always (F₄)] keepe [keep (F₃ F₄)] below staieres [stairs (F₃ F₄)]? (F₂ F₃ F₄), over me, why, shall I always keepe below Stairs? (Rowe₁), over me? why, shall I always keepe below Stairs? (Rowe₂)

25 (stage direction)] After 'legs' (l 24) in Q Ff

41 Enter *Beatrice*] After 'thee' (l 43) in Q, after 'terms' (l 41) in Ff

47 came for (Rowe₂)] came (Q Ff)

Scene 3, 10 dumb (F₄)] dead (Q), dombe (F₁ F₂ F₃)

21 Heavily, heavily] Heaunly, heaunly (Q), Heauenly, heauenly (F₁).

22 *Claud* (Rowe)] *Lo* (Q F₁ F₂), *Le* (F₃ F₄)

25 prey'd (F₄)] preied (Q F₁ F₂), preyed (F₃)

30 weeds (F₂ F₄)] weedes (Q F₁ F₂), weedle (Collier MS)

32 speeds (Q F₁)] speed (F₂ F₃ F₄), speed's [i e., speed us] (Thirlby conj.; Theobald)

Scene 4 (stage direction) *Antonio*] *old man* (Q F₁ F₂), *Old man* (F₃ F₄), *Antonio* (Rowe)

7, etc. *Ant* (Rowe)] *Old* (Q), *Old* (Ff).

7 sort (Ff)] sorts (Q)

12 mask'd (Ff)] masked (Q)

12 *Exeunt Ladies*] After 'Claudio' (l 16) in Q Ff, corrected by Clark and Wright

32 (stage direction)] *Enter Prince, and Claudio, and two or three other* (Q after 'Claudio,' l 33), *Enter Prince and Claudio* [Claudio, (F₁), Claudio (F₄)] *with attendants* (Ff after 'help,' l 32)

33 Here . . Claudio] om Ff

54 *Ant*] *Leo*. (Q F₁ F₂), *Leon* (F₃ F₄); *Anto.* (Theobald)

76 for they swore (Capell)] they swore (Q Ff), for they did swear (Hanmer)

88 Fashion'd (Rowe)] Fashioned (Q Ft).

98 *Bene* (Theobald)] *Leon* (Q Ff)

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 peradventure, perhaps, i, 2, 23, u, 1, 153
 Philemon, u, 1, 100
 plague, misfortune, u, 2, 136
 plaintiffs for defendants, v, 1, 261
 pleaded, i, 2, 9, u, 1, 7
 pluck, to pull, i, 1, 265, v, 1, 208
 policy of mind, iv, 1, 199

- politic, well organized, v, 2, 62
 possess, to take possession of, iii, 3, 160,
 165, inform, v, 1, 290
 practice, plotting, iv, 1, 189, the forming
 and carrying out of a plot, v, 1, 255
 practise on, to work upon by trickery, ii,
 1, 398
 preceptual, consisting of mere precepts,
 v, 1, 24
 predestinate, *p p*, predestinated, i, 1, 135
 present, to represent, iii, 3, 80
 presently, instantly, immediately, at
 once, without delay, i, 1, 88, 330, ii, 2,
 57, iii, 1, 14, iv, 1, 252, v, 2, 101,
 v, 4, 71
 press to death, iii, 1, 76
 Prester John, ii, 1, 277
 prevent, to forestall, ii, 2, 136
 prize, to appraise, iii, 1, 90
 prohibit *for* grant, v, 1, 333
 project, a vague idea, iii, 1, 55
 prolong, to postpone, iv, 1, 255
 proof, experience, ii, 1, 188, iv, 1, 46,
 an example, instance, ii, 3, 170
 proper, its own, iv, 1, 176, handsome, i,
 3, 54, ii, 3, 189, v, 1, 174, fine, iv, 1,
 311
 propose, *n*, talk, iii, 1, 12
 propose, *v*, to talk, converse, iii, 1, 3
 prospect, imaginative sight, iv, 1, 230
 protest, to declare, iv, 1, 286, proclaim,
 v, 1, 148
 prove, to try to find out, i, 3, 76
 purchase, to deserve, iii, 1, 70
 purpose (to any), at all to the point, v,
 4, 104
 push (made a), v, 1, 38
 Pygmies, ii, 1, 278

 quaint, elegant, iii, 4, 22
 qualify, to modify, lessen, relieve, v, 4, 67
 qualities, traits of character, ii, 1, 106
 qualm, sickness, faintness, iii, 4, 75
 queasy, delicate, ii, 1, 399
 question (in), iii, 3, 192
 quip, a gibe, ii, 3, 249
 quirks, tricks of phrase, ii, 3, 246
 quit of, *v*, to settle accounts with, iv, 1,
 201
 quondam, ancient, v, 2, 32

 rack, to strain to the limit, iv, 1, 221
 rage, intensity of grief, v, 1, 24
 reading, ability to read character, iv, 1,
 166
 rearward of (on the), after, iv, 1, 127
 rebato, a stiff collar, iii, 4, 6
 rechat, a signal to call back the dogs, i,
 1, 242
 reclusive, cloistered, iv, 1, 243

 recover'd *for* discovered, iii, 3, 180
 redemption *for* damnation, iv, 2, 58
 reechy, smoky, iii, 3, 142
 reformed, *p p*, *for* informed, v, 1, 262
 refuse, to cast off, iv, 1, 185, iv, 2, 64
 remorse, compassion, iv, 1, 212
 reportingly, on the authority of report,
 iii, 1, 116
 reprove, to disprove, confute, ii, 3, 243
 respect of (in), in comparison with, iii, 4,
 18
 respects, considerations, ii, 3, 176
 revelling, festivity, i, 1, 322
 reverence, sacred profession, iv, 1, 169,
 (saving your), iii, 4, 30, 31
 reverent, reverend, v, 4, 126
 rheum, tears, v, 2, 85
 right (do me), accept my challenge, v, 1,
 148

 's, it's, iii, 4, 9, 18
 's, us, iii, 4, 45
 sad, serious, i, 1, 184, i, 3, 60, ii, 1, 357,
 iii, 2, 16, v, 1, 209
 sadly, seriously, ii, 3, 226
 salvation *for* damnation, iii, 3, 2
 salve, to make smooth, i, 1, 317
 Saturn (born under), i, 3, 12
 saving your reverence, iii, 4, 30, 31
 scab, a scurvy fellow, iii, 3, 107
 scrambling, quarrels, v, 1, 94
 season, soundness, iv, 1, 143
 second, to aid and abet, v, 1, 2
 seeming, hypocrisy, iv, 1, 57
 sentence, a wise saying, ii, 3, 249
 serve, to answer the purpose, i, 1, 320
 sevennight, a week, ii, 1, 375
 shall, is to, ii, 2, 1, will certainly, iv, 1,
 211
 shape, clear conception, iii, 1, 55
 shift, an emergency, ii, 3, 80
 should, were to, v, 1, 247, certainly
 would, iv, 1, 250
 show, to appear, i, 2, 8
 shrewd, shrewish, ii, 1, 21
 shrewdly, keenly and bitterly, ii, 1, 84
 side-sleeves, iii, 4, 20
 sigh away Sundays, i, 1, 203, 204
 simple, pure and simple, iv, 1, 39, (true),
 plain-spoken and sincere, i, 1, 169
 simpleness, sincerity of character, iii, 1, 70
 sirrah, iv, 2, 15, 29
 slanders, slanderers, v, 1, 222
 slops, loose breeches, iii, 2, 34
 smoke, to fumigate, i, 3, 58
 so, provided that, ii, 1, 91, v, 1, 152
 soft (and fair), wait a moment, v, 4, 72,
 (you), go slow, v, 1, 208
 sometime, sometimes, i, 1, 288 ii, 3, 157:
 iii, 3, 144, 145

- son, son-in-law, *n*, 1, 374
 sort, *n*, rank, 1, 1, 6, 33
 sort, *v*, to come out, result, *iv*, 1, 241,
v, 4, 7
 speed, to prosper, *v*, 3, 32
 spell him backward, *iii*, 1, 61
 spend, to empty, 1, 1, 273
 spirits, vital forces, *iv*, 1, 113, 126,
 strength, *iv*, 1, 190
 spoke, *p p*, spoken, *iv*, 1, 97
 squarer, a quarrelsome fellow, 1, 82
 staff, a walking stick, *v*, 4, 125, a shaft,
v, 1, 138
 stale, a harlot, *n*, 2, 25, *iv*, 1, 66
 stalk on, go on quietly, *n*, 3, 95
 stand out, to rebel, 1, 3, 21
 stand with, to agree with, *v*, 4, 29
 star, the North Star, *iii*, 4, 58
 start-up, an upstart, 1, 3, 68
 stay, to interrupt, *iv*, 1, 285
 still, ever, always, 1, 1, 118, 134, *n*, 3, 48
 stomach, appetite, 1, 1, 52, 1, 3, 17, *ii*, 3,
 264, digestion, *ii*, 1, 399
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 strain, lineage, *n*, 1, 394, a trait, feature,
v, 1, 12
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 stuff'd (am), have a cold in my head, *iii*,
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 stuff'd man, 1, 1, 59
 subscribe, to post up, *v*, 2, 60
 success, the sequel, *iv*, 1, 235
 sufferance, suffering, *v*, 1, 38
 sufficiency, ability, *v*, 1, 29
 suffigance, sufficiency, *iii*, 5, 56
 suit (out of), *n*, 1, 364, 365
 suit, to be comparable, *v*, 1, 7
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 sure, trustworthy, 1, 3, 71
 suspect for respect, *iv*, 2, 76
 sweet, dear, *iv*, 1, 31, 64, *v*, 1, 236
 sworn brother, 1, 1, 73
 tabor, a small drum, *n*, 3, 13
 ta'en, *p p*, taken, 1, 3, 22, *v*, 4, 127
 taken up, *iii*, 3, 190, 191
 tartly, sour, *n*, 1, 3
 tax, to take to task, censure, 1, 1, 46, to
 task, *n*, 3, 46
 tedious, *iii*, 5, 23
 temper, to mix, compound, *n*, 2, 21
 temporize with, to adapt one's self to, 1,
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 tender, an offer, *n*, 3, 185
 tenure, tenour, purport, *iv*, 1, 168
 terminations, defining terms, *n*, 1, 254
 that, *pron*, what, 1, 3, 38, *iii*, 2, 122,
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 that, *cony*, so that, *iv*, 1, 141, now that,
v, 1, 303, (in), inasmuch as, *v*, 4, 112
 them, themselves, *n*, 3, 241
 thereupon, on account of that, *v*, 2, 50
 thick-pleached, closely screened with
 vines and hedges, 1, 2, 9
 thief, a rascal, *iii*, 3, 132
 thoroughly, thoroughly, *iv*, 1, 201
 thwarting, *adj*, *iii*, 2, 135
 tuckling (*briskly*), *iii*, 1, 80
 time (in good), *n*, 1, 73
 tire, headdress, *iii*, 4, 13
 to, as to, *n*, 3, 147, *iii*, 4, 81, in com-
 parison with, 1, 1, 54, *iii*, 3, 126, *v*, 1,
 205
 tolerable for intolerable, *iii*, 3, 36
 tongues, foreign languages, *v*, 1, 165
 took, *p p*, taken, *iv*, 1, 133
 top (to take time by the), 1, 2, 15
 trace, to stroll along, *iii*, 1, 16
 transgression, an error, *n*, 1, 229
 travail, *n*, *iv*, 1, 214
 treatise, a story, 1, 1, 317
 trencherman, eater, 1, 1, 52
 trial, a test, *v*, 1, 66
 trim, fine, *iv*, 1, 324
 Troilus, *v*, 2, 31
 troth, by my faith, *v*, 4, 77
 trow? do you suppose? *iii*, 4, 59
 truant, an inconstant fellow, *iii*, 2, 18
 true, loyal, *iii*, 3, 1, honest, *iii*, 3, 54
 trumpet, a trumpeter, *v*, 2, 89
 try, to test, 1, 1, 262
 Turk (turn'd), *iii*, 4, 57
 turn his girdle, *v*, 1, 142
 turning (*in a pun*), *n*, 1, 160
 twist, to knit up, compose, 1, 1, 313
 unconfirm'd, *adj*, lacking experience, *iii*,
 3, 124
 uncover'd, *adj*, outspoken, *iv*, 1, 306
 under, as the victim of, *iv*, 1, 171
 underborne, *iii*, 4, 20
 undergoes, has been subjected to, *v*, 2, 55
 undo, to ruin, *n*, 2, 30, *iv*, 1, 313, *v*, 4, 20
 unhappiness, amusing roguery, *n*, 1, 361
 unhopefullest, least promising, *n*, 1, 393
 unmeet, improper, unbecoming, *iv*, 1, 183
 untowardly turned, *iii*, 2, 134
 up and down, hither and yon, every-
 where, *v*, 1, 122, out and out, *ii*, 1, 122
 upon, as the result of, because of, *n*, 3,
 219, *iv*, 1, 224, *iv*, 2, 55, 64, *v*, 1, 249,
 257, *v*, 4, 3, 96, against, *v*, 1, 39
 use, profitable employment, 1, 3, 40,
 interest, *n*, 1, 288
 use, to practise, 1, 3, 41, *v*, 1, 318
 uttered, *v*, 3, 20
 vagrom, *adj*, vagrant, *iii*, 3, 26
 vanity, *iii*, 3, 21
 varlet, fellow, scamp, *iv*, 2, 74

- Venice, i, 1, 273
 verified, *p p*, asserted as true, v, 1, 223
 vice, a screw, v, 2, 21
 vigilant *for* vigilant, iii, 3, 100
 villany, malicious satire, ii, 1, 145
 virtue, excellence, ii, 1, 127, iv, 1, 222,
pl, fine qualities, v, 2, 89
 visor, a mask, ii, 1, 100, a masked person,
 ii, 1, 164
 vouchsafe, to allow, ii, 2, 3

 wag, be off, v, 1, 16
 wait upon, to accompany as attendants,
 i, 3, 77
 wake, to disturb, v, 1, 102
 warrant, confirmation, iii, 2, 114
 warren, a rabbit warren, ii, 1, 220
 watching, *n*, keeping awake, ii, 1, 388
 weak, trivial, iii, 1, 54
 wear it out, ii, 3, 209
 weeds, garments, v, 3, 30
 well-favoured, handsome, iii, 3, 15
 what, whatever, iii, 1, 52
 what for a, what kind of, i, 3, 50
 when all's done, after all, ii, 3, 62
 which, whom, v, 1, 329
 whiles, while, so long as, iv, 1, 220, 223,
 v, 1, 253, v, 4, 66
 who, whom, i, 1, 213, v, 1, 232
 wide, *ado*, wildly, iv, 1, 63
 will (against her), unintentionally, v, 4, 5

 willow, ii, 1, 194
 Wilson (Jack), ii, 3, 44 (note)
 win and wear, v, 1, 82
 windy, windward, ii, 1, 325
 wish, to advise, iii, 1, 42
 wit, one's wits, one's mind, v, 1, 128, in-
 telligence, sense, i, 2, 17, mental alert-
 ness, ii, 3, 192
 wit-cracker, one who cracks jokes, v, 4,
 100
 with, by, i, 1, 67, ii, 1, 63, ii, 2, 37, iii,
 1, 66, 67, v, 1, 116, because of, v, 3, 7
 withal, with it, i, 2, 22, ii, 3, 264, with,
 iv, 1, 37
 witness, evidence, ii, 3, 48
 wits (five), mental faculties, i, 1, 66
 woodbine, honeysuckle, iii, 1, 30
 woodcock, foolish fellow, v, 1, 158
 woollen (in the), between blankets, ii, 1,
 34
 word (at a), ii, 1, 118, 125
 world (a), iii, 5, 37, (go to the), to get
 married, ii, 1, 330, 331
 worth (to the), to its full value, iv, 1, 219
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THE FIRST PART OF
KING HENRY THE FOURTH

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INTRODUCTION

PART I OF HENRY THE FOURTH was entered in the Stationers' Register on February 25, 1598, by Andrew Wyse, as 'The historye of Henry the IIIth with his battaile of Shrewsburye against Henry Hotspurre of the Northe with the conceived mirthe of Sir John Falstoff,'¹ and the First Quarto² came out in the same year.³ Seven other Quartos of PART I appeared from 1599 to 1639 (see Textual Notes). The printer of the First Folio (1623) used the Fifth Quarto (1613) as copy. The sole authority for the text is the excellent Quarto of 1598. The Quartos do not divide the play into Acts and Scenes. This division is made in the Folios, but with some confusion in Act V.

For the dates of composition we may fix upon 1597 for PART I and 1598 for PART II without risk of serious error. Francis Meres, writing before October 19, 1598, mentions 'Henry the 4' as one of Shakespeare's excellent tragedies (*Palladis Tamia. Wits Treasury*, 1598). Perhaps he means to include both Parts under that title, but his evidence is ambiguous.

For historical materials in both Parts of HENRY THE FOURTH, as in *Richard the Second*, Shakespeare went to the second edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1587). The events in PART I all come within the limits of almost exactly a year. Sir Edmund Mortimer (whom Shakespeare, like Holinshed, confuses with the Earl of March) was taken prisoner by Glendower on June 22, 1402; the defeat of the Scots at Homildon followed on September 14; on July 21, 1403, Hotspur was killed in the Battle of Shrewsbury—no one knows by whom; Worcester

¹Arber's *Transcript*, III, 105.

²The | History of | Henrie the | Fovrth; | With the battell at Shrewsburne, | *betweene the King and Lord* | Henry Percy, surnamed | Henrie Hotspur of | the North | *With the humorous conceits of Sir* | Iohn Falstaffe. | At London, | Printed by P[eter]. S[horth]. for Andrew Wise, dwelling | in Paules Churchyard, at the signe of | the Angell 1598

³Four leaves of a Quarto (doubtless also of 1598) which may have preceded the First Quarto are in the Folger Library. For a minute description see Hemingway's *Variorum Edition*, 1936, pp. 344-349

and Vernon were executed two days later. In the play the historical year is reduced to some three or four months.¹

Shakespeare owes much to Holinshed for facts and ideas, little for phraseology. A typical instance is Hotspur's famous speech before the battle (v, 2, 82 ff.): 'O gentlemen, the time of life is short!' Holinshed reports it thus:

This daie shall either bring vs all to aquauncement & honor, or else, if it shall chance vs to be ouercome, shall deliuer vs from the kings spitefull malice and cruell disdaine for plaieng the men (as we ought to doo), better it is to die in battell for the commonwealths cause, than through cowardlike feare to prolong life, which after shall be taken from vs, by sentence of the enimie

For the riotous behaviour of Hal and his companions Shakespeare found suggestions in Holinshed; but more noteworthy are the curious details that he derived from the old play of *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*.² This he used for both Parts of HENRY THE FOURTH. In the old play, for instance, when the Prince promises Ned that he shall be Chief Justice, Ned replies, 'By gogs wounds, ile be the brauest Lord chiefe Iustice That euer was in England' (cf. I, i, 2, 72); Derick tickles his nose with a straw to make it bleed (cf. I, ii, 4, 340); the Prince's resort is 'the olde Tauerne in Eastcheape', there is a comic scene of conscription (cf. II, iii, 2), and so on.

The two Parts of HENRY IV are not the two halves of a single play. Each Part is a drama complete in itself. The word 'Part' signifies an historical period—a portion of King Henry's reign—not the division of a dramatic unit. PART I and PART II are neither tragedies nor comedies. Each of them is a History. This distinction was so well understood in Shakespeare's time

¹The time scheme calculated by P. A. Daniel is as exact as the evidence of the drama warrants (*New Shakspeare Society Transactions*, 1877-79, pp. 270-280).

²*The Famous Victories* was entered in the Stationers' Register in 1594 (Arber, II, 648) and the earliest edition known appeared in 1598, but the play was probably on the stage in or before 1588. See E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, IV, 17.

that it is recognized in the title page of the First Folio: 'Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies.'

The aim of a History (as the term implies) was to bring upon the stage, with a reasonable degree of accuracy, the main events of some period, and to present in action the characters concerned—in their habits as they lived. The requirement of accuracy, however, was not rigorous. It demanded merely that the playwright should not so flagrantly depart from the record as to shock the auditors or to challenge them to contradiction; and there was one department of his task in which he enjoyed liberty that almost amounted to license: namely, in the comic scenes. For such freedom he was indebted to that old-fashioned institution, the Dignity of History, which leaves low life unrecorded, except for an occasional anecdote.

In early plays of this class the comic scenes are often mere interludes that have little or nothing to do with the serious plot. They bring in the stock fun-makers of the stage—the clown or country bumpkin, the ludicrous drunkard, the pickpurse, the braggart or *Miles Gloriosus*, the gull or dupe. In 1 HENRY IV we observe a notable contribution to artistic structure: Shakespeare has made the comic scenes an integral part of the drama. And in the present case he enjoyed a matchless opportunity; for the wild youth of Prince Hal was an established tradition: and so, in his character, we have the connecting link between the serious matter and the merry-making. His riots are a vital element in the King's tragedy. Further, by a felicitous device that is all his own, Shakespeare has unified the whole by so developing the character of Hotspur as to bring him into sharp contrast with the Prince, not only in fact but also in the mind of the grief-stricken father (1, 1, 70-90). For bringing Prince Hal and Hotspur into rivalry as youthful aspirants for martial honour Shakespeare had no warrant in history. The Battle of Shrewsbury was fought when the Prince was only sixteen years old. It was his noviciate in arms and he gave proof of that valour for which he was afterwards so famous. Harry Percy was then some forty years of age and had won his pennon in

1378 at the siege of Berwick, a quarter of a century earlier.¹ In the play, the Prince rescues his father at Shrewsbury and kills Hotspur in hand-to-hand combat. These exploits bring the play to a happy ending and establish young Henry's position as the future hero-king. For neither of them had Shakespeare any historical authority. Who rescued the King is not recorded. We know that Percy fell in the battle, but we do not know who killed him, nor does history record any personal encounter between him and the Prince.²

The connection between *Richard the Second* and the FIRST PART OF HENRY THE FOURTH is close. Bolingbroke's character, well intimated in *Richard the Second*, is so developed in the later play that he becomes, as King Henry, one of the most baffling of all Shakespeare's complex creatures. He is genuinely patriotic. He had the good of his country at heart, and not merely personal advantage, when he deposed King Richard. His anxiety about his dissolute son is not paternal only. It is largely due to his fear of what will happen to England if another Harry shows himself another Richard in instability and tyrannical license. And so, profound dissembler though he is, he actually lays bare his own dissimulation in admonishing his son (III, 2, 50 ff.):

And then I stole all courtesy from heaven,
And dress'd myself in such humility
That I did pluck allegiance from men's hearts,
Loud shouts and salutations from their mouths
Even in the presence of the crowned King

This whole speech would be almost cynical, were it not for the passionate intensity which submerges the cynicism of its outspokenness. It looks back to King Richard's account of Boling-

¹Henry IV was born in 1367, Prince Henry in 1387. Hotspur was a little older than the King. He was born in 1364.

²Samuel Daniel in his poem on the *Civil Wars* suggests that 'young Hotespur' and the Prince are to meet in battle and ascribes the rescue of the King to the Prince (ed. 1595, Book III, stanzas 97, 111).

broke's 'courtship of the common people' (*Richard II*, 1, 4, 20 ff.) and to York's description of his triumphal progress after his return from banishment (v, 2, 7 ff.):

Then, as I said, the Duke, great Bolingbroke,
Mounted upon a hot and fiery steed
Which his aspiring rider seem'd to know,
With slow but stately pace kept on his course,
Whilst all tongues cried 'God save thee, Bolingbroke!'
You would have thought the very windows spake,
So many greedy looks of young and old
Through casements darted their desiring eyes
Upon his visage, and that all the walls
With painted imagery had said at once
'Jesu preserve thee! Welcome, Bolingbroke!'

Prince Hal does not appear in *Richard the Second*, but his riotous conduct and his companionship with highwaymen are deplored by his father in v, 3, where Hotspur's scorn of him, so hotly uttered in 1 HENRY IV (1, 3, 230 ff.), comes out by implication in his answer to King Henry's question. Before he began PART I, Shakespeare had somewhat modified his former conception of the Prince's character. In *Richard the Second* he is called 'as dissolute as desperate.' In 1 HENRY IV, on the contrary, he is neither desperate nor, in the full sense of the word, dissolute. His riots are mere frolics. He does not get drunk and is never involved in any scandal with a woman. Shakespeare, indeed, is so much concerned to guard against misconception on the part of the audience, that he deliberately renounces dramatic propriety in the famous soliloquy at the end of 1, 2. This is, in effect, the author's explanation—a kind of chorus—and should be so understood. It is not the expression of the Prince's actual motive in upholding 'the unyoked humour' of his riotous comrades. It amounts to a mere statement of fact made by Shakespeare himself:

'When the Prince turns over a new leaf, he will be all the more admired for the contrast.'

When Shakespeare wrote the FIRST PART OF HENRY THE FOURTH he gave to the character whom we know as Falstaff the name of Sir John Oldcastle, which he took from *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*. This he changed to Falstaff before the play was printed. Traces of the change appear in the text of both parts. In PART I, the Prince calls him 'my old lad of the castle' (1, 2, 47); and one line (11, 2, 115), though not unmetrical as it stands, would be more regular if 'Oldcastle' were read instead of 'Falstaff'. In PART II, a speech of Falstaff's (1, 2, 137) is still marked *Old*. in the Quarto of 1600; the Epilogue expressly declares that 'Oldcastle died a martyr, and this is not the man.' The historical Sir John Oldcastle (called Lord Cobham in his wife's right) was executed for heresy in 1417. The Cobham family was powerful in Shakespeare's time and no doubt protested against the profanation of what to them was a sacred name¹. For a substitute, Shakespeare went back to 1 *Henry VI*, in which one Sir John Fastolfe plays a coward's part, and borrowed the name, with a shift of letters. Perhaps this choice suggested itself because the Prince accuses Oldcastle-Falstaff of cowardice in 11, 4, after the robbers have been robbed, but Falstaff is not a coward in fact, though traditional interpretation has heedlessly taken the Prince's practical joke as if it justified the accusation.

To analyze a joke may be tedious, but, in the present instance, some scanning of details appears to be obligatory. Falstaff and his three companions, having robbed the travellers, are off their guard and engaged in dividing the spoil when

¹A protest against Shakespeare's Oldcastle exists in the play of *Sir John Oldcastle (Part I)*, by Drayton and others, acted in November, 1599, by the Admiral's company and printed in 1600. This treats Oldcastle seriously, and the Prologue emphasizes the contrast (ed. Brooke, *Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p. 129):

It is no pamp'rd glutton we present,
Nor aged Councillor to youthfull sinne,
But one, whose vertue shone aboue the rest,
A valiant Martyr and a vertuous peere

they are stampeded by a surprise attack. They think the officers are upon them in full force. Bardolph and Gadshill and Peto decamp without striking a blow. Falstaff, thus deserted, fences a bit with his two assailants and then runs away also. Why not? He is not a soldier on guard, bound, if need be, to sacrifice his life for his country. He is a highwayman in danger of arrest—and the penalty for robbery was hanging. The point of the jest lies, not in Falstaff's taking to his heels, but in his upbraiding the Prince and Poins for cowardice and thus enabling them to turn the tables, for it was he who ran—not they.

The test of Falstaff's courage comes at the Battle of Shrewsbury, where, if he is a coward, he certainly has the worst luck that ever dogged the steps of a poltroon. He commanded a company of a hundred and fifty foot soldiers, and he led them into the thick of the fight, where they were practically annihilated. Wherever we find him in the field, there we find also the Prince or the doughty Douglas or the heroic Percy. When he soliloquized upon honour, he repudiated it as 'a mere scutcheon' and declared that he had no desire for it; but when the time comes for action, he is always where he ought to be—in the centre of the field. To be sure, he saves his life by a stratagem when there is nothing to be gained by sacrificing it. But, again, why not? He knows the difference between valour and foolhardiness. He is a veteran officer who has had fighting enough in the past and does not love danger for its own sake. The best possible commentary on his military ethics is Shaw's instructive drama *Arms and the Man*.

'But,' objectors repeat, 'Falstaff *did* run away once upon a time.' True, but not from a battle. If it is cowardice to subscribe to the old Greek maxim, well expressed in *Hudibras*—

Those that fly may fight again,
Which he can never do that's slain—

what verdict have we for Douglas? Is he also a coward? The stage direction reads 'Douglas flieth' (v, 4, 43), and his flight

is precipitate:

Falling from a hill he was so bruus'd
That the pursuers took him

Yet Prince Henry pays Douglas a distinguished tribute (v, 5, 29-31):

His valour shown upon our crests to-day
Hath taught us how to cherish such high deeds,
Even in the bosom of our adversaries.

THE FIRST PART OF
KING HENRY THE FOURTH

[Dramatis Personæ.

King Henry the Fourth.

Henry, Prince of Wales,
Prince John of Lancaster, } sons to the King.
Earl of Westmoreland.

Sir Walter Blunt.

Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester.

Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland

Henry Percy, surnamed Hotspur, his son.

Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March

Richard Scroop, Archbishop of York.

Archibald, Earl of Douglas.

Owen Glendower.

Sir Richard Vernon.

Sir John Falstaff.

Sir Michael, a friend to the Archbishop of York.

Poins.

Gadshill.

Peto.

Bardolph.

Lady Percy, wife to Hotspur, and sister to Mortimer.

Lady Mortimer, daughter to Glendower, and wife to Mortimer.

Mistress Quickly, hostess of the Boar's Head in Eastcheap.

Lords, Officers, Sheriff, Vintner, Chamberlain, Drawers, two Carriers, Travellers, and Attendants

SCENE — *England and Wales.*]

For our advantage on the bitter cross.
But this our purpose now is twelvemonth old,
And bootless 'tis to tell you we will go.
Therefore we meet not now. Then let me hear 30
Of you, my gentle cousin Westmoreland,
What yesternight our Council did decree
In forwarding this dear expedience

West. My liege, this haste was hot in question
And many limits of the charge set down 35
But yesternight; when all athwart there came
A post from Wales, loaden with heavy news;
Whose worst was that the noble Mortimer,
Leading the men of Herefordshire to fight
Against the irregular and wild Glendower, 40
Was by the rude hands of that Welshman taken,
A thousand of his people butchered;
Upon whose dead corpse there was such misuse,
Such beastly shameless transformation,
By those Welshwomen done as may not be 45
Without much shame retold or spoken of.

King. It seems then that the tidings of this broil
Brake off our business for the Holy Land.

West. This, match'd with other, did, my gracious lord;
For more uneven and unwelcome news 50
Came from the North, and thus it did import
On Holy-rood Day the gallant Hotspur there,
Young Harry Percy, and brave Archibald,
That ever-valiant and approved Scot,
At Holmedon met, 55
Where they did spend a sad and bloody hour;
As by discharge of their artillery
And shape of likelihood the news was told;
For he that brought them, in the very heat

And pride of their contention did take horse, 60
Uncertain of the issue any way.

King Here is a dear, a true-industrious friend,
Sir Walter Blunt, new lighted from his horse,
Stain'd with the variation of each soil
Betwixt that Holmedon and this seat of ours, 65

And he hath brought us smooth and welcome news.
The Earl of Douglas is discomfited;
Ten thousand bold Scots, two-and-twenty knights,
Balk'd in their own blood did Sir Walter see
On Holmedon's plains Of prisoners, Hotspur took 70
Mordake Earl of Fife and eldest son
To beaten Douglas, and the Earl of Athol,
Of Murray, Angus, and Menteith.

And is not this an honourable spoil?
A gallant prize? Ha, cousin, is it not? 75

West. In faith,
It is a conquest for a prince to boast of.

King. Yea, there thou mak'st me sad, and mak'st me sin
In envy that my Lord Northumberland
Should be the father to so blest a son— 80

A son who is the theme of honour's tongue,
Amongst a grove the very straightest plant;
Who is sweet Fortune's minion and her pride;
Whilst I, by looking on the praise of him,
See riot and dishonour stain the brow 85

Of my young Harry. O that it could be prov'd
That some night-tripping fairy had exchang'd
In cradle clothes our children where they lay,
And call'd mine Percy, his Plantagenet!
Then would I have his Harry, and he mine. 90
But let him from my thoughts. What think you, coz,
Of this young Percy's pride? The prisoners

Which he in this adventure hath surpris'd
To his own use he keeps, and sends me word
I shall have none but Mordake Earl of Fife. 95

West. This is his uncle's teaching, this is Worcester,
Malevolent to you in all aspects,
Which makes him prune himself and bristle up
The crest of youth against your dignity

King. But I have sent for him to answer this; 100
And for this cause awhile we must neglect
Our holy purpose to Jerusalem.

Cousin, on Wednesday next our council we
Will hold at Windsor. So inform the lords;
But come yourself with speed to us again; 105
For more is to be said and to be done
Than out of anger can be uttered.

West. I will, my liege. *Exeunt.*

Scene II. [*London. An apartment of the Prince's.*]

Enter *Prince of Wales* and *Sir John Falstaff*.

Fal. Now, Hal, what time of day is it, lad?

Prince. Thou art so fat-witted with drinking of old sack, and unbuttoning thee after supper, and sleeping upon benches after noon, that thou hast forgotten to demand that truly which thou wouldest truly know. What a devil hast thou to do with the time of the day? Unless hours were cups of sack, and minutes capons, and clocks the tongues of bawds, and dials the signs of leaping houses, and the blessed sun himself a fair hot wench in flame-coloured taffeta, I see no reason why thou shouldst be so superfluous to demand the time of the day. 13

Fal. Indeed you come near me now, Hal; for we that take purses go by the moon and the seven stars. and not by Phoebus,

he, that wand'ring knight so fair. And I prithee, sweet wag, when thou art king, as, God save thy Grace—Majesty I should say, for grace thou wilt have none— 20

Prince. What, none?

Fal. No, by my troth; not so much as will serve to be prologue to an egg and butter.

Prince. Well, how then? Come, roundly, roundly. 25

Fal. Marry, then, sweet wag, when thou art king, let not us that are squires of the night's body be called thieves of the day's beauty. Let us be Diana's Foresters, Gentlemen of the Shade, Minions of the Moon; and let men say we be men of good government, being governed as the sea is, by our noble and chaste mistress the moon, under whose countenance we steal.

Prince. Thou sayest well, and it holds well too; for the fortune of us that are the moon's men doth ebb and flow like the sea, being governed, as the sea is, by the moon. As, for proof now: a purse of gold most resolutely snatch'd on Monday night and most dissolutely spent on Tuesday morning, got with swearing 'Lay by,' and spent with crying 'Bring in'; now in as low an ebb as the foot of the ladder, and by-and-by in as high a flow as the ridge of the gallows.

Fal. By the Lord, thou say'st true, lad—and is not my hostess of the tavern a most sweet wench? 46

Prince. As the honey of Hybla, my old lad of the castle—and is not a buff jerkin a most sweet robe of durance? 49

Fal. How now, how now, mad wag? What, in thy quips and thy quiddities? What a plague have I to do with a buff jerkin?

Prince. Why, what a pox have I to do with my hostess of the tavern? 54

Fal. Well, thou hast call'd her to a reckoning many a time and oft.

Prince. Did I ever call for thee to pay thy part? 58

Fal. No, I'll give thee thy due, thou hast paid all there

Prince. Yea, and elsewhere, so far as my coin would stretch;
and where it would not, I have used my credit. 63

Fal. Yea, and so us'd it that, were it not here apparent that
thou art heir apparent—But I prithee, sweet wag, shall there be
gallows standing in England when thou art king? and resolu-
tion thus fubb'd as it is with the rusty curb of old father antic
the law? Do not thou, when thou art king, hang a thief. 70

Prince. No; thou shalt.

Fal. Shall I? O rare! By the Lord, I'll be a brave judge.

Prince. Thou judgest false already. I mean, thou shalt have
the hanging of the thieves and so become a rare hangman. 76

Fal. Well, Hal, well, and in some sort it jumps with my hu-
mour as well as waiting in the court, I can tell you.

Prince. For obtaining of suits? 80

Fal. Yea, for obtaining of suits, whereof the hangman hath
no lean wardrobe 'Sblood, I am as melancholy as a gib-cat or a
lugg'd bear

Prince. Or an old lion, or a lover's lute

Fal. Yea, or the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe. 86

Prince. What sayest thou to a hare, or the melancholy of
Moor Ditch?

Fal. Thou hast the most unsavoury similes, and art indeed
the most comparative, rascalliest, sweet young prince. But, Hal,
I prithee trouble me no more with vanity. I would to God thou
and I knew where a commodity of good names were to be
bought. An old lord of the Council rated me the other day in
the street about you, sir, but I mark'd him not; and yet he talk'd
very wisely, but I regarded him not; and yet he talk'd wisely,
and in the street too

Prince. Thou didst well; for wisdom cries out in the streets,
and no man regards it. 100

Fal. O, thou hast damnable iteration, and art indeed able to

corrupt a saint. Thou hast done much harm upon me, Hal—God forgive thee for it! Before I knew thee, Hal, I knew nothing; and now am I, if a man should speak truly, little better than one of the wicked. I must give over this life, and I will give it over! By the Lord, an I do not, I am a villain! I'll be damn'd for never a king's son in Christendom.

Prince. Where shall we take a purse tomorrow, Jack? 111

Fal. Zounds, where thou wilt, lad! I'll make one. An I do not, call me villain and baffle me.

Prince I see a good amendment of life in thee—from praying to purse-taking 115

Fal. Why, Hal, 'tis my vocation, Hal. 'Tis no sin for a man to labour in his vocation

Enter Poins.

Poins! Now shall we know if Gadshill have set a match. O, if men were to be saved by merit, what hole in hell were hot enough for him? This is the most omnipotent villain that ever cried 'Stand!' to a true man. 122

Prince. Good morrow, Ned.

Poins. Good morrow, sweet Hal. What says Monsieur Remorse? What says Sir John Sack and Sugar? Jack, how agrees the devil and thee about thy soul, that thou soldest him on Good Friday last for a cup of Madeira and a cold capon's leg? 129

Prince. Sir John stands to his word, the devil shall have his bargain; for he was never yet a breaker of proverbs. He will give the devil his due

Poins. Then art thou damn'd for keeping thy word with the devil. 135

Prince. Else he had been damn'd for cozening the devil.

Poins. But, my lads, my lads, to-morrow morning, by four o'clock early, at Gadshill! There are pilgrims going to Canterbury with rich offerings, and traders riding to London with fat

purses. I have vizards for you all; you have horses for yourselves. Gadshill lies to-night in Rochester. I have bespoke supper to-morrow night in Eastcheap. We may do it as secure as sleep. If you will go, I will stuff your purses full of crowns, if you will not, tarry at home and be hang'd!

Fal. Hear ye, Yedward: if I tarry at home and go not, I'll hang you for going. 150

Poins. You will, chops?

Fal. Hal, wilt thou make one?

Prince. Who, I rob? I a thief? Not I, by my faith. 154

Fal. There's neither honesty, manhood, nor good fellowship in thee, nor thou cam'st not of the blood royal if thou darest not stand for ten shillings.

Prince. Well then, once in my days I'll be a madcap. 160

Fal. Why, that's well said.

Prince. Well, come what will, I'll tarry at home.

Fal. By the Lord, I'll be a traitor then, when thou art king.

Prince. I care not. 166

Poins. Sir John, I prithee, leave the Prince and me alone. I will lay him down such reasons for this adventure that he shall go. 169

Fal. Well, God give thee the spirit of persuasion and him the ears of profiting, that what thou speakest may move and what he hears may be believed, that the true prince may (for recreation sake) prove a false thief; for the poor abuses of the time want countenance. Farewell; you shall find me in Eastcheap.

Prince. Farewell, thou latter spring! farewell, All-hallown summer! 178

[*Exit Falstaff.*]

Poins. Now, my good sweet honey lord, ride with us to-morrow. I have a jest to execute that I cannot manage alone. Falstaff, Bardolph, Peto, and Gadshill shall rob those men that we have already waylaid; yourself and I will not be there, and

when they have the booty, if you and I do not rob them, cut this head off from my shoulders 186

Prince. How shall we part with them in setting forth?

Poins. Why, we will set forth before or after them and appoint them a place of meeting, wherein it is at our pleasure to fail, and then will they adventure upon the exploit themselves; which they shall have no sooner achieved, but we'll set upon them. 194

Prince. Yea, but 'tis like that they will know us by our horses, by our habits, and by every other appointment, to be ourselves.

Poins. Tut! our horses they shall not see—I'll tie them in the wood; our vizards we will change after we leave them; and, sirrah, I have cases of buckram for the nonce, to immask our noted outward garments

Prince. Yea, but I doubt they will be too hard for us. 204

Poins. Well, for two of them, I know them to be as true-bred cowards as ever turn'd back; and for the third, if he fight longer than he sees reason, I'll forswear arms. The virtue of this jest will be the incomprehensible lies that this same fat rogue will tell us when we meet at supper: how thirty, at least, he fought with; what wards, what blows, what extremities he endured; and in the reproof of this lies the jest. 214

Prince. Well, I'll go with thee Provide us all things necessary and meet me to-night in Eastcheap There I'll sup Farewell.

Poins. Farewell, my lord.

Exit.

Prince. I know you all, and will awhile uphold
The unyok'd humour of your idleness. 220

Yet herein will I imitate the sun,
Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up his beauty from the world,
That, when he please again to be himself,

Being wanted, he may be more wond' red at 225
By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.
If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as to work;
But when they seldom come, they wish'd-for come, 230
And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents
So, when this loose behaviour I throw off
And pay the debt I never promised,
By how much better than my word I am,
By so much shall I falsify men's hopes; 235
And, like bright metal on a sullen ground,
My reformation, glitt'ring o'er my fault,
Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
Than that which hath no foil to set it off
I'll so offend to make offence a skill, 240
Redeeming time when men think least I will. *Exit*

Scene III. [London. The Palace]

*Enter the King, Northumberland, Worcester, Hotspur,
Sir Walter Blunt, with others.*

King. My blood hath been too cold and temperate,
Unapt to stir at these indignities,
And you have found me, for accordingly
You tread upon my patience; but be sure
I will from henceforth rather be myself, 5
Mighty and to be fear'd, than my condition,
Which hath been smooth as oil, soft as young down,
And therefore lost that title of respect
Which the proud soul ne'er pays but to the proud.

Wor. Our house, my sovereign liege, little deserves
The scourge of greatness to be us'd on it—
And that same greatness too which our own hands
Have help to make so portly.

North. My lord—

King. Worcester, get thee gone; for I do see
Danger and disobedience in thine eye.
O, sir, your presence is too bold and peremptory,
And majesty might never yet endure
The moody frontier of a servant brow.
You have good leave to leave us. When we need
Your use and counsel, we shall send for you.

Exit Worcester.

You were about to speak.

North. Yea, my good lord.
Those prisoners in your Highness' name demanded
Which Harry Percy here at Holmedon took,
Were, as he says, not with such strength denied
As is delivered to your Majesty.
Either envy, therefore, or misprision
Is guilty of this fault, and not my son.

Hot. My liege, I did deny no prisoners.
But I remember, when the fight was done,
When I was dry with rage and extreme toil,
Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword,
Came there a certain lord, neat and trimly dress'd,
Fresh as a bridegroom; and his chin new reap'd
Show'd like a stubble land at harvest home.
He was perfumed like a milliner,
And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held
A pouncet box, which ever and anon
He gave his nose, and took't away again;
Who therewith angry, when it next came there,

Took it in snuff; and still he smil'd and talk'd;
And as the soldiers bore dead bodies by,
He call'd them untaught knaves, unmannerly,
To bring a slovenly unhandsome corse
Betwixt the wind and his nobility. 45
With many holiday and lady terms
He questioned me, amongst the rest demanded
My prisoners in your Majesty's behalf.
I then, all smarting with my wounds being cold,
To be so pest' red with a popingay, 50
Out of my grief and my impatience
Answer'd neglectingly, I know not what—
He should, or he should not; for he made me mad
To see him shine so brisk, and smell so sweet,
And talk so like a waiting gentlewoman 55
Of guns and drums and wounds—God save the mark!—
And telling me the sovereignest thing on earth
Was parmacuity for an inward bruise;
And that it was great pity, so it was,
This villanous saltpetre should be digg'd 60
Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,
Which many a good tall fellow had destroy'd
So cowardly; and but for these vile guns,
He would himself have been a soldier.
This bald unjointed chat of his, my lord, 65
I answered indirectly, as I said,
And I beseech you, let not his report
Come current for an accusation
Betwixt my love and your high majesty.
Blunt. The circumstance considered, good my lord, 70
Whate'er Lord Harry Percy then had said
To such a person, and in such a place,
At such a time, with all the rest retold,

May reasonably die, and never rise
To do him wrong, or any way impeach 75
What then he said, so he unsay it now.

King. Why, yet he doth deny his prisoners,
But with proviso and exception,
That we at our own charge shall ransom straight
His brother-in-law, the foolish Mortimer, 80
Who, on my soul, hath wilfully betray'd
The lives of those that he did lead to fight
Against that great magician, damn'd Glendower,
Whose daughter, as we hear, the Earl of March
Hath lately married. Shall our coffers, then, 85
Be emptied to redeem a traitor home?
Shall we buy treason? and indent with fears
When they have lost and forfeited themselves?
No, on the barren mountains let him starve!
For I shall never hold that man my friend 90
Whose tongue shall ask me for one penny cost
To ransom home revolted Mortimer.

Hot. Revolted Mortimer?
He never did fall off, my sovereign liege,
But by the chance of war. To prove that true 95
Needs no more but one tongue for all those wounds,
Those mouthed wounds, which valiantly he took
When on the gentle Severn's sedgy bank,
In single opposition hand to hand,
He did confound the best part of an hour 100
In changing hardiment with great Glendower.
Three times they breath'd, and three times did they drunk,
Upon agreement, of swift Severn's flood;
Who then, affrighted with their bloody looks,
Ran fearfully among the trembling reeds 105
And hid his crisp head in the hollow bank.

Bloodstained with these valiant combatants
Never did base and rotten policy
Colour her working with such deadly wounds;
Nor never could the noble Mortimer 110
Receive so many, and all willingly
Then let not him be slandered with revolt

King. Thou dost belie him, Percy, thou dost belie him!
He never did encounter with Glendower.

I tell thee 115

He durst as well have met the devil alone
As Owen Glendower for an enemy.
Art thou not asham'd? But, sirrah, henceforth
Let me not hear you speak of Mortimer
Send me your prisoners with the speediest means, 120
Or you shall hear in such a kind from me
As will displease you. My Lord Northumberland,
We license your departure with your son.—
Send us your prisoners, or you will hear of it.

Exeunt King, [Blunt, and Train].

Hot. An if the devil come and roar for them, 125
I will not send them. I will after straight
And tell him so; for I will ease my heart,
Albeit I make a hazard of my head

North. What, drunk with choler? Stay, and pause awhile.
Here comes your uncle.

Enter Worcester.

Hot. Speak of Mortimer? 130
Zounds, I will speak of him, and let my soul
Want mercy if I do not join with him!
Yea, on his part I'll empty all these veins,
And shed my dear blood drop by drop in the dust.

But I will lift the downtrod Mortimer 135
As high in the air as this unthankful king,
As this ingrate and cank' red Bolingbroke

North Brother, the King hath made your nephew mad

Wor. Who struck this heat up after I was gone?

Hot. He will (forsooth) have all my prisoners; 140
And when I urg'd the ransom once again
Of my wive's brother, then his cheek look'd pale,
And on my face he turn'd an eye of death,
Trembling even at the name of Mortimer.

Wor. I cannot blame him. Was not he proclaim'd 145
By Richard that dead is, the next of blood?

North He was; I heard the proclamation.
And then it was when the unhappy King
(Whose wrongs in us God pardon!) did set forth
Upon his Irish expedition; 150
From whence he intercepted did return
To be depos'd, and shortly murdered.

Wor. And for whose death we in the world's wide mouth
Live scandaliz'd and foully spoken of.

Hot. But soft, I pray you Did King Richard then 155
Proclaim my brother Edmund Mortimer
Heir to the crown?

North. He did, myself did hear it

Hot Nay, then I cannot blame his cousin king,
That wish'd him on the barren mountains starve.
But shall it be that you, that set the crown 160
Upon the head of this forgetful man,
And for his sake wear the detested blot
Of murtherous subornation—shall it be
That you a world of curses undergo,
Being the agents or base second means, 165
The cords, the ladder, or the hangman rather?

O, pardon me that I descend so low
To show the line and the predicament
Wherein you range under this subtle king!
Shall it for shame be spoken in these days, 170
Or fill up chronicles in time to come,
That men of your nobility and power
Did gage them both in an unjust behalf
(As both of you, God pardon it! have done)
To put down Richard, that sweet lovely rose, 17
And plant this thorn, this canker, Bolingbroke?
And shall it in more shame be further spoken
That you are fool'd, discarded, and shook off
By him for whom these shames ye underwent?
No! yet time serves wherein you may redeem 180
Your banish'd honours and restore yourselves
Into the good thoughts of the world again,
Revenge the jeering and disdain'd contempt
Of this proud king, who studies day and night
To answer all the debt he owes to you 185
Even with the bloody payment of your deaths.
Therefore I say—

Wor. Peace, cousin, say no more;
And now I will unclasp a secret book,
And to your quick-conceiving discontents
I'll read you matter deep and dangerous, 190
As full of peril and adventurous spirit
As to o'erwalk a current roaring loud
On the unsteadfast footing of a spear.

Hot If he fall in, good night, or sink or swim!
Send danger from the east unto the west, 195
So honour cross it from the north to south,
And let them grapple. O, the blood more stirs
To rouse a lion than to start a hare!

North. Imagination of some great exploit
Drives him beyond the bounds of patience. 200

Hot. By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap
To pluck bright honour from the pale-fac'd moon,
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
Where fadom line could never touch the ground,
And pluck up drowned honour by the locks, 205
So he that doth redeem her thence might wear
Without corrival all her dignities;
But out upon this half-fac'd fellowship!

Wor. He apprehends a world of figures here,
But not the form of what he should attend. 210
Good cousin, give me audience for a while.

Hot. I cry you mercy.

Wor. Those same noble Scots
That are your prisoners—

Hot. I'll keep them all.
By God, he shall not have a Scot of them!
No, if a Scot would save his soul, he shall not. 215
I'll keep them, by this hand!

Wor. You start a'way.
And lend no ear unto my purposes
Those prisoners you shall keep.

Hot. Nay, I will! That's flat!
He said he would not ransom Mortimer,
Forbade my tongue to speak of Mortimer, 220
But I will find him when he lies asleep,
And in his ear I'll holloa 'Mortimer'

Nay;
I'll have a starling shall be taught to speak
Nothing but 'Mortimer,' and give it him 225
To keep his anger still in motion.

Wor. Hear you, cousin, a word.

Hot. All studies here I solemnly defy
Save how to gall and pinch this Bolingbroke;
And that same sword-and-buckler Prince of Wales— 230
But that I think his father loves him not
And would be glad he met with some mischance,
I would have him poisoned with a pot of ale.

Wor. Farewell, kinsman. I will talk to you
When you are better temper'd to attend. 235

Noth. Why, what a wasp-stung and impatient fool
Art thou to break into this woman's mood,
Tying thine ear to no tongue but thine own!

Hot. Why, look you, I am whipp'd and scourg'd with rods,
Nettled, and stung with pismirés when I hear 240
Of this vile politician, Bolingbroke.

In Richard's time—what do you call the place?—
A plague upon it! it is in Gloucestershire—
'Twas where the madcap Duke his uncle kept—
His uncle York—where I first bow'd my knee 245
Unto this king of smiles, this Bolingbroke—
'Sblood!

When you and he came back from Ravenspurgh—

Noth. At Berkeley Castle.

Hot. You say true. 250

Why, what a candy deal of courtesy
This fawning greyhound then did proffer me!
Look, 'when his infant fortune came to age,'
And 'gentle Harry Percy,' and 'kind cousin'—
O, the devil take such cozeners!—God forgive me! 255
Good uncle, tell your tale, for I have done.

Wor. Nay, if you have not, to it again.

We will stay your leisure

Hot. I have done, i' faith.

Wor. Then once more to your Scottish prisoners.

Deliver them up without their ransom straight, 260
And make the Douglas' son your only mean
For powers in Scotland; which, for divers reasons
Which I shall send you written, be assur'd
Will easily be granted. [*To Northumberland*] You, my lord,
Your son in Scotland being thus employ'd, 265
Shall secretly into the bosom creep
Of that same noble prelate well-belov'd,
The Archbishop.

Hot. Of York, is it not?

Wor. True; who bears hard 270
His brother's death at Bristow, the Lord Scroop.
I speak not this in estimation,
As what I think might be, but what I know
Is ruminated, plotted, and set down,
And only stays but to behold the face 275
Of that occasion that shall bring it on.

Hot. I smell it. Upon my life, it will do well.

North. Before the game is afoot thou still let'st slip.

Hot. Why, it cannot choose but be a noble plot
And then the power of Scotland and of York 280
To join with Mortimer, ha?

Wor. And so they shall.

Hot. In faith, it is exceedingly well aim'd.

Wor. And 'tis no little reason bids us speed,
To save our heads by raising of a head;
For, bear ourselves as even as we can, 285
The King will always think him in our debt,
And think we think ourselves unsatisfied,
Till he hath found a time to pay us home.
And see already how he doth begin
To make us strangers to his looks of love. 290

Hot. He does, he does! We'll be reveng'd on him.

Wor. Cousin, farewell No further go in this
Than I by letters shall direct your course.
When time is ripe, which will be suddenly,
I'll steal to Glendower and Lord Mortimer, 295
Where you and Douglas, and our pow'rs at once,
As I will fashion it, shall happily meet,
To bear our fortunes in our own strong arms,
Which now we hold at much uncertainty.

North. Farewell, good brother. We shall thrive, I trust. 300

Hot. Uncle, adieu. O, let the hours be short
Till fields and blows and groans applaud our sport! *Exeunt.*

Enter a *Carrier* with a lantern in his hand.

1. *Car.* Heigh-ho! an it be not four by the day, I'll be hang'd. Charles' wain is over the new chimney, and yet our horse not pack'd—What, ostler!

Ost [*within*] Anon, anon.

5

1. *Car.* I prithee, Tom, beat Cut's saddle, put a few flocks in the point. Poor jade is wrung in the withers out of all cess.

Enter another *Carrier*.

2. *Car.* Peas and beans are as dank here as a dog, and that is the next way to give poor jades the bots. This house is turned upside down since Robin Ostler died

12

1. *Car.* Poor fellow never joyed since the price of oats rose. It was the death of him.

2. *Car.* I think this be the most villanous house in all London road for fleas. I am stung like a tench

17

1. *Car.* Like a tench? By the mass, there is ne'er a king christen could be better bit than I have been since the first cock.

2. *Car.* Why, they will allow us ne'er a jordan, and then we leak in your chimney, and your chamber-lye breeds fleas like a loach.

1. *Car.* What, ostler! come away and be hang'd! come away!

2. *Car.* I have a gammon of bacon and two razes of ginger, to be delivered as far as Charing Cross.

1. *Car.* God's body! the turkeys in my pannier are quite starved. What, ostler! A plague on thee! hast thou never an eye in thy head? Canst not hear? An 'twere not as good deed as drink to break the pate on thee, I am a very villain. Come, and be hang'd! Hast no faith in thee?

35

Enter *Gadshill*.

Gads. Good morrow, carriers. What's o'clock?

1 *Car*. I think it be two o'clock.

Gads. I prithee lend me thy lantern to see my gelding in the stable. 39

1 *Car*. Nay, by God, soft! I know a trick worth two of that, i' faith.

Gads. I pray thee lend me thine

2 *Car*. Ay, when? canst tell? Lend me thy lantern, quoth he? Marry, I'll see thee hang'd first! 45

Gads. Sirrah carrier, what time do you mean to come to London? "

2. *Car*. Time enough to go to bed with a candle, I warrant thee. Come, neighbour Mugs, we'll call up the gentlemen. They will along with company, for they have great charge.

Exeunt [Carriers].

Gads. What, ho! chamberlain!

52

Enter *Chamberlain*.

Cham. At hand, quoth pickpurse.

Gads. That's even as fair as—'at hand, quoth the chamberlain'; for thou variest no more from picking of purses than giving direction doth from labouring: thou layest the plot how. 57

Cham. Good morrow, Master Gadshill. It holds current that I told you yesternight. There's a franklin in the Wild of Kent hath brought three hundred marks with him in gold. I heard him tell it to one of his company last night at supper—a kind of auditor; one that hath abundance of charge too, God knows what. They are up already and call for eggs and butter. They will away presently. 66

Gads. Sirrah, if they meet not with Saint Nicholas' clerks, I'll give thee this neck.

Cham. No, I'll none of it I pray thee keep that for the hangman; for I know thou worshippest Saint Nicholas as truly as a man of falsehood may. 72

Gads. What talkest thou to me of the hangman? If I hang, I'll make a fat pair of gallows; for if I hang, old Sir John hangs with me, and thou knowest he is no starveling. Tut! there are other Troyans that thou dream'st not of, the which for sport sake are content to do the profession some grace; that would (if matters should be look'd into) for their own credit sake make all whole. I am joined with no foot land-rakers, no long-staff sixpenny strikers, none of these mad mustachio purple-hued maltworms; but with nobility and tranquillity, burgomasters and great oneyers, such as can hold in, such as will strike sooner than speak, and speak sooner than drink, and drink sooner than pray; and yet, zounds, I lie, for they pray continually to their saint, the commonwealth, or rather, not pray to her, but prey on her, for they ride up and down on her and make her their boots. 91

Cham. What, the commonwealth their boots? Will she hold out water in foul way?

Gads. She will, she will! Justice hath liquor'd her. We steal as in a castle, cocksure. We have the receipt of fernseed, we walk invisible.

Cham. Nay, by my faith, I think you are more beholding to the night than to fernseed for your walking invisible. 99

Gads. Give me thy hand. Thou shalt have a share in our purchase, as I am a true man.

Cham. Nay, rather let me have it, as you are a false thief.

Gads. Go to; 'homo' is a common name to all men. Bid the ostler bring my gelding out of the stable. Farewell, you muddy knave. 106

Exeunt.

Scene II. [*The highway near Gadshill.*]

Enter *Prince* and *Poins*.

Poins. Come, shelter, shelter! I have remov'd Falstaff's horse, and he frets like a gumm'd velvet.

Prince. Stand close. [*They step aside.*]

Enter *Falstaff*.

Fal. Poins! Poins, and be hang'd! Poins!

Prince. [*comes forward*] Peace, ye fat-kidney'd rascal! What a brawling dost thou keep!

Fal. Where's Poins, Hal?

7

Prince. He is walk'd up to the top of the hill. I'll go seek him. [*Steps aside.*]

Fal. I am accurs'd to rob in that thief's company. The rascal hath removed my horse and tied him I know not where. If I travel but four foot by the squire further afoot, I shall break my wind. Well, I doubt not but to die a fair death for all this, if I scape hanging for killing that rogue. I have forsworn his company hourly any time this two-and-twenty years, and yet I am bewitch'd with the rogue's company. If the rascal have not given me medicines to make me love him, I'll be hang'd. It could not be else. I have drunk medicines. Poins! Hal! A plague upon you both! Bardolph! Peto! I'll starve ere I'll rob a foot further. An 'twere not as good a deed as drink to turn true man and to leave these rogues, I am the veriest varlet that ever chewed with a tooth. Eight yards of uneven ground is threescore and ten miles afoot with me, and the stony-hearted villains know it well enough. A plague upon it when thieves cannot be true one to another! (*They whistle.*) Whew! A plague upon you all! Give me my horse, you rogues! give me my horse and be hang'd!

32

Prince. [*comes forward*] Peace, ye fat-guts! Lie down, lay thine ear close to the ground, and list if thou canst hear the tread of travellers.

Fal. Have you any levers to lift me up again, being down? 'Sblood, I'll not bear mine own flesh so far afoot again for all the coin in thy father's exchequer. What a plague mean ye to colt me thus? 40

Prince. Thou liest; thou art not colted, thou art uncolted.

Fal. I prithee, good Prince Hal, help me to my horse, good king's son. 44

Prince. Out, ye rogue! Shall I be your ostler?

Fal. Go hang thyself in thine own heir-apparent garters! If I be ta'en, I'll peach for this. An I have not ballads made on you all, and sung to filthy tunes, let a cup of sack be my poison. When a jest is so forward—and afoot too—I hate it. 50

Enter Gadshill, [Bardolph and Peto with him].

Gads. Stand!

Fal. So I do, against my will

Poins. [*comes forward*] O, 'tis our setter. I know his voice. Bardolph, what news? 54

Bar. Case ye, case ye! On with your vizards! There's money of the King's coming down the hill; 'tis going to the King's exchequer.

Fal. You lie, ye rogue! 'Tis going to the King's tavern.

Gads. There's enough to make us all. 60

Fal. To be hang'd.

Prince. Sirs, you four shall front them in the narrow lane; Ned Poins and I will walk lower. If they scape from your encounter, then they light on us. 65

Peto. How many be there of them?

Gads. Some eight or ten.

Fal. Zounds, will they not rob us?

Prince. What, a coward, Sir John Paunch?

Fal. Indeed, I am not John of Gaunt, your grandfather; but yet no coward, Hal. 71

Prince. Well, we leave that to the proof.

Poins. Sirrah Jack, thy horse stands behind the hedge. When thou need'st him, there thou shalt find him. Farewell and stand fast. 75

Fal. Now cannot I strike him, if I should be hang'd.

Prince. [*aside to Poins*] Ned, where are our disguises?

Poins. [*aside to Prince*] Here, hard by. Stand close.

[*Exeunt Prince and Poins.*]

Fal. Now, my masters, happy man be his dole, say I. Every man to his business. 81

Enter the Travellers.

Traveller. Come, neighbour.

The boy shall lead our horses down the hill;
We'll walk afoot awhile and ease our legs.

Thieves. Stand! 85

Traveller. Jesus bless us!

Fal. Strike! down with them! cut the villains' throats! Ah, whoreson caterpillars! bacon-fed knaves! they hate us youth. Down with them! fleece them! 90

Traveller. O, we are undone, both we and ours for ever!

Fal. Hang ye, gorbellied knaves, are ye undone? No, ye fat chuffs; I would your store were here! On, bacons, on! What, ye knaves! young men must live. You are grandjurors, are ye? We'll jure ye, faith! 97

Here they rob and bind them. Exeunt.

Enter the Prince and Poins [in buckram suits].

Prince. The thieves have bound the true men. Now could thou and I rob the thieves and go merrily to London, it would

be argument for a week, laughter for a month, and a good jest for ever. 102

Poins. Stand close! I hear them coming.

[*They stand aside.*]

Enter the *Thieves* again.

Fal. Come, my masters, let us share, and then to horse before day. An the Prince and Poins be not two arrant cowards, there's no equity stirring. There's no more valour in that Poins than in a wild duck. 108

Prince. Your money!

Poins. Villains!

{ *As they are sharing, the Prince and Poins set upon them. They all run away, and Falstaff, after a blow or two, runs away too, leaving the booty behind them.*

Prince. Got with much ease. Now merrily to horse. 111

The thieves are scattered, and possess'd with fear

So strongly that they dare not meet each other.

Each takes his fellow for an officer

Away, good Ned. Falstaff sweats to death 115

And lards the lean earth as he walks along.

Were't not for laughing, I should pity him.

Poins. How the rogue roar'd!

Exeunt.

Scene III. [*Warkworth Castle.*]

Enter *Hotspur* solus, reading a letter.

Hot. 'But, for mine own part, my lord, I could be well contented to be there, in respect of the love I bear your house.' He could be contented—why is he not then? In respect of the love he bears our house! He shows in this he loves his own barn

better than he loves our house. Let me see some more. 'The purpose you undertake is dangerous'—Why, that's certain! 'Tis dangerous to take a cold, to sleep, to drink; but I tell you, my lord fool, out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety. 'The purpose you undertake is dangerous, the friends you have named uncertain, the time itself unsorted, and your whole plot too light for the counterpoise of so great an opposition.' Say you so, say you so? I say unto you again, you are a shallow, cowardly hind, and you lie. What a lack-brain is this! By the Lord, our plot is a good plot as ever was laid; our friends true and constant: a good plot, good friends, and full of expectation; an excellent plot, very good friends. What a frosty-spirited rogue is this! Why, my Lord of York commends the plot and the general course of the action. Zounds, an I were now by this rascal, I could brain him with his lady's fan. Is there not my father, my uncle, and myself, Lord Edmund Mortimer, my Lord of York, and Owen Glendower? Is there not, besides, the Douglas? Have I not all their letters to meet me in arms by the ninth of the next month, and are they not some of them set forward already? What a pagan rascal is this! an infidel! Ha! you shall see now, in very sincerity of fear and cold heart will he to the King and lay open all our proceedings. O, I could divide myself and go to buffets for moving such a dish of skim milk with so honourable an action! Hang him, let him tell the King! we are prepared. I will set forward to-night.

38

Enter his Lady.

How now, Kate? I must leave you within these two hours.

Lady. O my good lord, why are you thus alone? 40
For what offence have I this fortnight been
A banish'd woman from my Harry's bed?
Tell me, sweet lord, what is't that takes from thee

Thy stomach, pleasure, and thy golden sleep?
Why dost thou bend thine eyes upon the earth, 45
And start so often when thou sit'st alone?
Why hast thou lost the fresh blood in thy cheeks
And given my treasures and my rights of thee
To thick-ey'd musing and curs'd melancholy?
In thy faint slumbers I by thee have watch'd, 50
And heard thee murmur tales of iron wars,
Speak terms of manage to thy bounding steed,
Cry 'Courage! to the field!' And thou hast talk'd
Of sallies and retires, of trenches, tents,
Of palisadoes, frontiers, parapets, 55
Of basilisks, of cannon, culverin,
Of prisoners' ransom, and of soldiers slain,
And all the currents of a heady fight.
Thy spirit within thee hath been so at war,
And thus hath so bestirr'd thee in thy sleep, 60
That beads of sweat have stood upon thy brow
Like bubbles in a late-disturbed stream,
And in thy face strange motions have appear'd,
Such as we see when men restrain their breath
On some great sudden hest. O, what portents are these? 65
Some heavy business hath my lord in hand,
And I must know it, else he loves me not.

Hot. What, ho!

[Enter a *Servant*.]

Is Gilliams with the packet gone?

Serv. He is, my lord, an hour ago.

Hot. Hath Butler brought those horses from the sheriff? 70

Serv. One horse, my lord, he brought even now

Hot. What horse? A roan, a crop-ear, is it not?

Serv. It is, my lord.

Hot. That roan shall be my throne.
Well, I will back him straight. O esperance!
Bid Butler lead him forth into the park.

75

[*Exit Servant.*]

Lady. But hear you, my lord.

Hot. What say'st thou, my lady?

Lady. What is it carries you away?

Hot. Why, my horse, my love—my horse!

Lady. Out, you mad-headed ape!

80

A weasel hath not such a deal of spleen

As you are toss'd with In faith,

I'll know your business, Harry; that I will!

I fear my brother Mortimer doth stir

About his title and hath sent for you

85

To line his enterprise; but if you go—

Hot. So far afoot, I shall be weary, love.

Lady. Come, come, you paraquito, answer me
Directly unto this question that I ask.

In faith. I'll break thy little finger, Harry,

90

An if thou wilt not tell me all things true

Hot. Away,

Away, you trifler! Love? I love thee not;

I care not for thee, Kate This is no world

To play with mammets and to tilt with lips.

95

We must have bloody noses and crack'd crowns,

And pass them current too. Gods me, my horse!

What say'st thou, Kate? What wouldst thou have with me?

Lady. Do you not love me? do you not indeed?

Well, do not then; for since you love me not,

100

I will not love myself. Do you not love me?

Nay, tell me if you speak in jest or no.

Hot. Come, wilt thou see me ride?

And when I am a-horseback, I will swear

I love thee infinitely But hark you, Kate 105
I must not have you henceforth question me
Whither I go, nor reason whereabouts.
Whither I must, I must, and to conclude,
This evening must I leave you, gentle Kate.
I know you wise; but yet no farther wise 110
Than Harry Percy's wife; constant you are,
But yet a woman; and for secrecy,
No lady closer, for I well believe
Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know,
And so far will I trust thee, gentle Kate. 115
Lady. How? so far?
Hot. Not an inch further. But hark you, Kate:
Whither I go, thither shall you go too;
To-day will I set forth, to-morrow you. 119
Will this content you, Kate?
Lady. It must of force. *Exeunt.*

Scene IV [*Eastcheap. The Boar's Head Tavern.*]

Enter *Prince* and *Poins*.

Prince. Ned, prithee come out of that fat-room and lend me thy hand to laugh a little

Poins. Where hast been, Hal?

Prince. With three or four loggerheads amongst three or fourscore hogsheads. I have sounded the very bass-string of humility. Sirrah, I am sworn brother to a leash of drawers and can call them all by their christen names, as Tom, Dick, and Francis. They take it already upon their salvation that, though I be but Prince of Wales, yet I am the king of courtesy; and tell me flatly I am no proud Jack like Falstaff, but a Corinthian, a lad

of mettle, a good boy (by the Lord, so they call me!), and when I am King of England I shall command all the good lads in Eastcheap. They call drinking deep, dying scarlet; and when you breathe in your watering, they cry 'hem!' and bid you play it off. To conclude, I am so good a proficient in one quarter of an hour that I can drink with any tinker in his own language during my life. I tell thee, Ned, thou hast lost much honour that thou wert not with me in this action. But, sweet Ned—to sweeten which name of Ned, I give thee this pennyworth of sugar, clapp'd even now into my hand by an under skinker, one that never spake other English in his life than 'Eight shillings and sixpence,' and 'You are welcome,' with this shrill addition, 'Anon, anon, sir! Score a pint of bastard in the Half-moon,' or so—but, Ned, to drive away the time till Falstaff come, I prithee do thou stand in some by-room while I question my puny drawer to what end he gave me the sugar; and do thou never leave calling 'Francis!' that his tale to me may be nothing but 'Anon!' Step aside, and I'll show thee a precedent. 37

Poins. Francis!

Prince. Thou art perfect.

Poins. Francis!

[*Exit Poins.*]

Enter [*Francis, a*] Drawer.

Fran. Anon, anon, sir.—Look down into the Pomgarnet, Ralph.

Prince. Come hither, Francis.

Fran. My lord?

Prince. How long hast thou to serve, Francis? 45

Fran. Forsooth, five years, and as much as to—

Poins. [*within*] Francis!

Fran. Anon, anon, sir. 49

Prince. Five year! by'r Lady, a long lease for the clinking of pewter. But, Francis, darest thou be so valiant as to play the

coward with thy indenture and show it a fair pair of heels and run from it? 54

Fran. O Lord, sir, I'll be sworn upon all the books in England I could find in my heart—

Poins. [*within*] Francis!

Fran. Anon, sir.

Prince. How old art thou, Francis?

Fran. Let me see. About Michaelmas next I shall be— 61

Poins. [*within*] Francis!

Fran. Anon, sir. Pray stay a little, my lord.

Prince. Nay, but hark you, Francis For the sugar thou gavest me—'twas a pennyworth, was't not? 66

Fran. O Lord! I would it had been two!

Prince. I will give thee for it a thousand pound. Ask me when thou wilt, and thou shalt have it. 70

Poins. [*within*] Francis!

Fran. Anon, anon.

Prince. Anon, Francis? No, Francis; but to-morrow, Francis; or, Francis, a Thursday; or indeed, Francis, when thou wilt. But Francis— 75

Fran. My lord?

Prince. Wilt thou rob this leathern-jerkin. crystal-button, not-pated, agate-ring, puke-stocking, caddis-garter, smooth-tongue, Spanish-pouch— 80

Fran. O Lord, sir, who do you mean?

Prince. Why then, your brown bastard is your only drink; for look you, Francis, your white canvas doublet will sully. In Barbary, sir, it cannot come to so much. 85

Fran. What, sir?

Poins. [*within*] Francis!

Prince. Away, you rogue! Dost thou not hear them call? 89

*Here they both call him. The Drawer stands amazed,
not knowing which way to go.*

Enter *Vintner*.

Vint. What, stand'st thou still, and hear'st such a calling?
Look to the guests within. [*Exit Francis.*] My lord, old Sir John,
with half-a-dozen more, are at the door. Shall I let them in? 94

Prince Let them alone awhile, and then open the door. [*Exit Vintner.*] Poinz!

Poinz. [*within*] Anon, anon, sir.

Enter *Poinz*.

Prince. Sirrah, Falstaff and the rest of the thieves are at the door. Shall we be merry? 99

Poinz. As merry as crickets, my lad. But hark ye, what cunning match have you made with this jest of the drawer? Come, what's the issue?

Prince. I am now of all humours that have showed themselves humours since the old days of goodman Adam to the pupil age of this present twelve o'clock at midnight. 107

[*Enter Francis.*]

What's o'clock, Francis?

Fran. Anon, anon, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Prince. That ever this fellow should have fewer words than a parrot, and yet the son of a woman! His industry is upstairs and downstairs, his eloquence the parcel of a reckoning. I am not yet of Percy's mind, the Hotspur of the North; he that kills me some six or seven dozen of Scots at a breakfast, washes his hands, and says to his wife, 'Fie upon this quiet life! I want work.' 'O my sweet Harry,' says she, 'how many hast thou kill'd to-day?' 'Give my roan horse a drench,' says he, and answers 'Some fourteen,' an hour after, 'a trifle, a trifle.' I prithee call in Falstaff. I'll play Percy, and that damn'd brawn

shall play Dame Mortimer his wife. 'Rivo' says the drunkard.
Call in ribs, call in tallow.

125

Enter *Falstaff*, [*Gadshill*, *Bardolph*, and *Peto*;
Francis follows with wine].

Poins. Welcome, Jack. Where hast thou been?

Fal. A plague of all cowards, I say, and a vengeance too! Marry and amen! Give me a cup of sack, boy. Ere I lead this life long, I'll sew nether-stocks, and mend them and foot them too. A plague of all cowards! Give me a cup of sack, rogue. Is there no virtue extant?

He drinketh.

Prince. Didst thou never see Titan kiss a dish of butter? Pitiful-hearted butter, that melted at the sweet tale of the sun! If thou didst, then behold that compound.

136

Fal. You rogue, here's lime in this sack too! There is nothing but roguery to be found in villanous man. Yet a coward is worse than a cup of sack with lime in it—a villanous coward! Go thy ways, old Jack, die when thou wilt; if manhood, good manhood, be not forgot upon the face of the earth, then am I a shotten herring. There lives not three good men unhang'd in England; and one of them is fat, and grows old. God help the while! A bad world, I say. I would I were a weaver; I could sing psalms or anything. A plague of all cowards I say still!

Prince. How now, woolsack? What mutter you?

149

Fal. A king's son! If I do not beat thee out of thy kingdom with a dagger of lath and drive all thy subjects afore thee like a flock of wild geese, I'll never wear hair on my face more. You Prince of Wales?

Prince. Why, you whoreson round man, what's the matter?

Fal. Are not you a coward? Answer me to that—and *Poins* there?

Poins. Zounds, ye fat paunch, an ye call me coward, by the Lord, I'll stab thee 160

Fal. I call thee coward? I'll see thee damn'd ere I call thee coward, but I would give a thousand pound I could run as fast as thou canst. You are straight enough in the shoulders; you care not who sees your back. Call you that backing of your friends? A plague upon such backing! Give me them that will face me. Give me a cup of sack. I am a rogue if I drunk to-day.

Prince. O villain! thy lips are scarce wip'd since thou drunk'st last. 171

Fal. All is one for that. (*He drinketh*) A plague of all cowards still say I.

Prince. What's the matter? 174

Fal. What's the matter? There be four of us here have ta'en a thousand pound this day morning.

Prince. Where is it, Jack? Where is it?

Fal. Where is it? Taken from us it is. A hundred upon poor four of us! 180

Prince. What, a hundred, man?

Fal. I am a rogue if I were not at half-sword with a dozen of them two hours together. I have scap'd by miracle. I am eight times thrust through the doublet, four through the hose; my buckler cut through and through; my sword hack'd like a handsaw—*ecce signum!* I never dealt better since I was a man. All would not do. A plague of all cowards! Let them speak. If they speak more or less than truth, they are villains and the sons of darkness.

Prince. Speak, sirs. How was it?

Gads. We four set upon some dozen—

Fal. Sixteen at least, my lord.

Gads. And bound them.

195

Peto. No, no, they were not bound

Fal You rogue, they were bound, every man of them, or I am a Jew else—an Ebrew Jew

Gads. As we were sharing, some six or seven fresh men set upon us— 200

Fal. And unbound the rest, and then come in the other.

Prince. What, fought you with them all?

Fal. All? I know not what you call all, but if I fought not with fifty of them, I am a bunch of radish! If there were not two or three and fifty upon poor old Jack, then am I no two-legg'd creature.

Prince Pray God you have not murd' red some of them. 210

Fal. Nay, that's past praying for. I have pepper'd two of them Two I am sure I have paid, two rogues in buckram suits. I tell thee what, Hal—if I tell thee a lie, spit in my face, call me horse. Thou knowest my old ward. Here I lay, and thus I bore my point. Four rogues in buckram let drive at me.

Prince. What, four? Thou saidst but two even now.

Fal. Four, Hal. I told thee four. 220

Poins. Ay, ay, he said four.

Fal. These four came all afront and mainly thrust at me I made me no more ado but took all their seven points in my target, thus.

Prince. Seven? Why, there were but four even now 226

Fal In buckram?

Poins. Ay, four, in buckram suits.

Fal. Seven, by these hults, or I am a villain else.

Prince. [*aside to Poins*] Prithce let him alone. We shall have more anon. 231

Fal. Dost thou hear me, Hal?

Prince. Ay, and mark thee too, Jack.

Fal. Do so, for it is worth the list'ning to. These nine in buckram that I told thee of—

Prince. So, two more already.

Fal. Their points being broken—

Poins. Down fell their hose 239

Fal. Began to give me ground, but I followed me close, came in, foot and hand, and with a thought seven of the eleven I paid

Prince. O monstrous! Eleven buckram men grown out of two!

Fal. But, as the devil would have it, three misbegotten knaves in Kendal green came at my back and let drive at me; for it was so dark, Hal, that thou couldst not see thy hand. 248

Prince. These lies are like their father that begets them—gross as a mountain, open, palpable Why, thou clay-brain'd guts, thou knotty-pated fool, thou whoreson obscene greasy tallow-catch—

Fal. What, art thou mad? 'art thou mad? Is not the truth the truth? 255

Prince. Why, how couldst thou know these men in Kendal green when it was so dark thou couldst not see thy hand? Come, tell us your reason. What sayest thou to this? 259

Poins. Come, your reason, Jack, your reason

Fal. What, upon compulsion? Zounds, an I were at the strapado or all the racks in the world, I would not tell you on compulsion. Give you a reason on compulsion? If reasons were as plentiful as blackberries, I would give no man a reason upon compulsion, I. 266

Prince. I'll be no longer guilty of this sin; this sanguine coward, this bed-presser, this horseback-breaker, this huge hill of flesh— 269

Fal. 'Sblood, you starveling, you elf-skin, you dried neat's-tongue, you bull's pizzle, you stockfish—O for breath to utter what is like thee!—you tailor's yard, you sheath, you bowcase, you vile standing tuck! 274

Prince. Well, breathe awhile, and then to it again; and when thou hast tired thyself in base comparisons, hear me speak but this.

Poins. Mark, Jack.

278

Prince. We two saw you four set on four, and bound them and were masters of their wealth. Mark now how a plain tale shall put you down. Then did we two set on you four and, with a word, outfaced you from your prize, and have it; yea, and can show it you here in the house. And, Falstaff, you carried your guts away as numbly, with as quick dexterity, and roar'd for mercy, and still run and roar'd, as ever I heard bullcalf. What a slave art thou to hack thy sword as thou hast done, and then say it was in fight! What trick, what device, what starting hole canst thou now find out to hide thee from this open and apparent shame?

Poins. Come, let's hear, Jack. What trick hast thou now? 294

Fal. By the Lord, I knew ye as well as he that made ye. Why, hear you, my masters. Was it for me to kill the heir apparent? Should I turn upon the true prince? Why, thou knowest I am as valiant as Hercules; but beware instinct! The lion will not touch the true prince. Instinct is a great matter. I was now a coward on instinct. I shall think the better of myself, and thee, during my life—I for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince. But, by the Lord, lads, I am glad you have the money. Hostess, clap to the doors. Watch to-night, pray to-morrow. Gallants, lads, boys, hearts of gold, all the titles of good fellowship come to you! What, shall we be merry? Shall we have a play extempore? 309

Prince. Content—and the argument shall be thy running away

Fal. Ah, no more of that, Hal, an thou lovest me!

Enter *Hostess*.

Host. O Jesu, my lord the Prince!

314

Prince. How now, my lady the hostess? What say'st thou to me?

Host. Marry, my lord, there is a nobleman of the court at door would speak with you. He says he comes from your father.

Prince. Give him as much as will make him a royal man, and send him back again to my mother.

Fal. What manner of man is he?

Host. An old man.

Fal. What doth gravity out of his bed at midnight? Shall I give him his answer? 326

Prince. Prithee do, Jack.

Fal. Faith, and I'll send him packing.

Exit.

Prince. Now, sirs. By'r Lady, you fought fair; so did you, Peto; so did you, Bardolph. You are lions too, you ran away upon instinct, you will not touch the true prince; no—fie!

Bard. Faith, I ran when I saw others run.

Prince. Tell me now in earnest, how came Falstaff's sword so hack'd? 335

Peto. Why, he hack'd it with his dagger, and said he would swear truth out of England but he would make you believe it was done in fight, and persuaded us to do the like. 339

Bard. Yea, and to tickle our noses with speargrass to make them bleed, and then to beslubber our garments with it and swear it was the blood of true men. I did that I did not this seven year before—I blush'd to hear his monstrous devices. 343

Prince. O villain! thou stolest a cup of sack eighteen years ago and wert taken with the manner, and ever since thou hast blush'd extempore. Thou hadst fire and sword on thy side, and yet thou ran'st away. What instinct hadst thou for it? 350

Bard. My lord, do you see these meteors? Do you behold these exhalations?

Prince. I do.

Bard. What think you they portend?

Prince. Hot livers and cold purses. 355

Bard. Choleric, my lord, if rightly taken.

Prince. No, if rightly taken, halter.

Enter Falstaff.

Here comes lean Jack; here comes bare-bone. How now, my sweet creature of bombast? How long is't ago, Jack, since thou sawest thine own knee? 361

Fal. My own knee? When I was about thy years, Hal, I was not an eagle's talent in the waist; I could have crept into any alderman's thumb-ring. A plague of sighing and grief! It blows a man up like a bladder. There's villanous news abroad. Here was Sir John Bracy from your father. You must to the court in the morning. That same mad fellow of the North, Percy, and he of Wales that gave Amamon the bastinado, and made Lucifer cuckold, and swore the devil his true liegeman upon the cross of a Welsh hook—what a plague call you him? 374

Poins. O, Glendower. 374

Fal. Owen, Owen—the same; and his son-in-law Mortimer, and old Northumberland, and that sprightly Scot of Scots, Douglas, that runs a-horseback up a hill perpendicular—

Prince. He that rides at high speed and with his pistol kills a sparrow flying. 380

Fal. You have hit it.

Prince. So did he never the sparrow.

Fal. Well, that rascal hath good metal in him; he will not run.

Prince. Why, what a rascal art thou then, to praise him so for running! 389

Fal. A-horseback, ye cuckoo! but afoot he will not budge a foot.

Prince. Yes, Jack, upon instinct. 389

Fal. I grant ye, upon instinct. Well, he is there too, and one

Mordake, and a thousand bluecaps more. Worcester is stol'n away to-night; thy father's beard is turn'd white with the news, you may buy land now as cheap as stinking mack'rel. 395

Prince. Why then, it is like, if there come a hot June, and this civil buffeting hold, we shall buy maidenheads as they buy hobnails, by the hundreds. 399

Fal. By the mass, lad, thou sayest true; it is like we shall have good trading that way. But tell me, Hal, art not thou horrible afeard? Thou being heir apparent, could the world pick thee out three such enemies again as that fiend Douglas, that spirit Percy, and that devil Glendower? Art thou not horribly afraid? Doth not thy blood thrill at it? 407

Prince. Not a whit, i' faith. I lack some of thy instinct.

Fal. Well, thou wilt be horribly chid to-morrow when thou comest to thy father. If thou love me, practise an answer.

Prince. Do thou stand for my father and examine me upon the particulars of my life.

Fal. Shall I? Content. This chair shall be my state, this dagger my sceptre, and this cushion my crown. 417

Prince. Thy state is taken for a join'd-stool, thy golden sceptre for a leaden dagger, and thy precious rich crown for a pitiful bald crown.

Fal. Well, an the fire of grace be not quite out of thee, now shalt thou be moved. Give me a cup of sack to make my eyes look red, that it may be thought I have wept, for I must speak in passion, and I will do it in King Cambyzes' vein.

Prince. Well, here is my leg.

Fal. And here is my speech. Stand aside, nobility. 429

Host. O Jesu, this is excellent sport, i' faith!

Fal. Weep not, sweet queen, for trickling tears are vain.

Host. O, the Father, how he holds his countenance!

Fal. For God's sake, lords, convey my tristful queen! 434
For tears do stop the floodgates of her eyes.

Host. O Jesu, he doth it as like one of these harlotry players as ever I see!

Fal. Peace, good pintpot Peace, good tickle-brain.—Harry, I do not only marvel where thou spendest thy time, but also how thou art accompanied. For though the camomile, the more it is trodden on, the faster it grows, yet youth, the more it is wasted, the sooner it wears. That thou art my son I have partly thy mother's word, partly my own opinion, but chiefly a villanous trick of thine eye and a foolish hanging of thy nether lip that doth warrant me. If then thou be son to me, here lies the point: why, being son to me, art thou so pointed at? Shall the blessed sun of heaven prove a micher and eat blackberries? A question not to be ask'd. Shall the son of England prove a thief and take purses? A question to be ask'd There is a thing, Harry, which thou hast often heard of, and it is known to many in our land by the name of pitch. This pitch, as ancient writers do report, doth defile; so doth the company thou keepest For, Harry, now I do not speak to thee in drink, but in tears; not in pleasure, but in passion; not in words only, but in woes also: and yet there is a virtuous man whom I have often noted in thy company, but I know not his name. 461

Prince. What manner of man, an it like your Majesty?

Fal. A goodly portly man, i' faith, and a corpulent; of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye, and a most noble carriage; and, as I think, his age some fifty, or, by'r Lady, inclining to threescore; and now I remember me, his name is Falstaff. If that man should be lewdly given, he deceiveth me; for, Harry, I see virtue in his looks. If then the tree may be known by the fruit, as the fruit by the tree, then, peremptorily I speak it, there is virtue in that Falstaff. Him keep with, the rest banish. And tell me now, thou naughty varlet, tell me where hast thou been this month?

Prince. Dost thou speak like a king? Do thou stand for me, and I'll play my father.

Fal. Depose me? If thou dost it half so gravely, so majestically, both in word and matter, hang me up by the heels for a rabbit-sucker or a poulter's hare. 481

Prince. Well, here I am set.

Fal. And here I stand. Judge, my masters.

Prince. Now, Harry, whence come you?

Fal. My noble lord, from Eastcheap. 485

Prince. The complaints I hear of thee are grievous.

Fal. 'Sblood, my lord, they are false! Nay, I'll tickle ye for a young prince, i' faith. 489

Prince. Swearst thou, ungracious boy? Henceforth ne'er look on me. Thou art violently carried away from grace. There is a devil haunts thee in the likeness of an old fat man; a tun of man is thy companion. Why dost thou converse with that trunk of humours, that bolting hutch of beastliness, that swoll'n parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that stuff'd cloakbag of guts, that roasted Manningtree ox with the pudding in his belly, that reverend vice, that grey iniquity, that father ruffian, that vanity in years? Wherein is he good, but to taste sack and drink it? wherein neat and cleanly, but to carve a capon and eat it? wherein cunning, but in craft? wherein crafty, but in villany? wherein villanous, but in all things? wherein worthy, but in nothing? 505

Fal. I would your Grace would take me with you. Whom means your Grace?

Prince. That villanous abominable misleader of youth, Falstaff, that old white-bearded Satan.

Fal. My lord, the man I know. 510

Prince. I know thou dost.

Fal. But to say I know more harm in him than in myself were to say more than I know. That he is old (the more the pity) his white hairs do witness it; but that he is (saving your reverence) a whoremaster, that I utterly deny. If sack and sugar

be a fault, God help the wicked! If to be old and merry be a sin, then many an old host that I know is damn'd. If to be fat be to be hated, then Pharaoh's lean kine are to be loved. No, my good lord Banish Peto, banish Bardolph, banish Poin; but for sweet Jack Falstaff, kind Jack Falstaff, true Jack Falstaff, valiant Jack Falstaff, and therefore more valiant being, as he is, old Jack Falstaff, banish not him thy Harry's company, banish not him thy Harry's company. Banish plump Jack, and banish all the world! 527

Prince. I do, I will.

[*A knocking heard.*]

[*Exeunt Hostess, Francis, and Bardolph.*]

Enter Bardolph, running.

Bard. O, my lord, my lord! the sheriff with a most monstrous watch is at the door 530

Fal. Out, ye rogue! Play out the play. I have much to say in the behalf of that Falstaff

Enter the Hostess.

Host. O Jesu, my lord, my lord!

Prince. Heigh, heigh, the devil rid's upon a fiddlestick! What's the matter? 535

Host. The sheriff and all the watch are at the door. They are come to search the house Shall I let them in?

Fal. Dost thou hear, Hal? Never call a true piece of gold a counterfeit. Thou art essentially mad without seeming so. 541

Prince. And thou a natural coward without instinct

Fal. I deny your major. If you will deny the sheriff, so, if not, let him enter. If I become not a cart as well as another man, a plague on my bringing up! I hope I shall as soon be strangled with a halter as another. 548

Prince. Go hide thee behind the arras. The rest walk up above. Now, my masters, for a true face and good conscience.

Fal Both which I have had, but their date is out, and therefore I'll hide me. *Exit.*

Prince. Call in the sheriff

554

[*Exeunt. Manent the Prince and Peto.*]

Enter *Sheriff* and the *Carrier*.

Now, Master Sheriff, what is your will with me?

Sher. First, pardon me, my lord A hue and cry 556
Hath followed certain men unto this house.

Prince. What men?

Sher. One of them is well known, my gracious lord—
A gross fat man.

Carrier. As fat as butter. 560

Prince. The man, I do assure you, is not here,
For I myself at this time have employ'd him.
And, sheriff, I will engage my word to thee
That I will by to-morrow dinner time
Send him to answer thee, or any man, 565
For anything he shall be charg'd withal;
And so let me entreat you leave the house.

Sher. I will, my lord. There are two gentlemen
Have in this robbery lost three hundred marks.

Prince. It may be so. If he have robb'd these men, 570
He shall be answerable; and so farewell.

Sher. Good night, my noble lord.

Prince. I think it is good morrow, is it not?

Sher. Indeed, my lord, I think it be two o'clock

Exit [with Carrier].

Prince. This oily rascal is known as well as Paul's. Go call
him forth. 576

Peto. Falstaff! Fast asleep behind the arras, and snorting like
a horse.

Prince. Hark how hard he fetches breath. Search his pockets.

He searcheth his pockets and findeth certain papers.

What hast thou found? 581

Peto. Nothing but papers, my lord.

Prince Let's see what they be Read them.

Peto [*reads*] 'Item, A capon ii s. ii d.
 Item, Sauce iii d.
 Item, Sack two gallons v s viii d.
 Item, Anchovies and Sack after supper . ii s. vi d.
 Item, Bread ob.'

Prince. O monstrous! but one halfpennyworth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack! What there is else, keep close; we'll read it at more advantage. There let him sleep till day. I'll to the court in the morning. We must all to the wars, and thy place shall be honourable. I'll procure this fat rogue a charge of foot, and I know his death will be a march of twelve score. The money shall be paid back again with advantage. Be with me betimes in the morning, and so good morrow, Peto. 596

Peto. Good morrow, good my lord.

Exeunt.

Enter *Hotspur, Worcester, Lord Mortimer, Owen Glendower.*

Mort. These promises are fair, the parties sure,
And our induction full of prosperous hope.

Hot. Lord Mortimer, and cousin Glendower,
Will you sit down?
And uncle Worcester. A plague upon it! 5
I have forgot the map.

Glend. No, here it is.
Sit, cousin Percy; sit, good cousin Hotspur,
For by that name as oft as Lancaster
Doth speak of you, his cheek looks pale, and with
A rising sigh he wisheth you in heaven. 10

Hot. And you in hell, as oft as he hears
Owen Glendower spoke of.

Glend. I cannot blame him. At my nativity
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes
Of burning cressets, and at my birth 15
The frame and huge foundation of the earth
Shak'd like a coward

Hot. Why, so it would have done at the same season, if your
mother's cat had but kitten'd, though yourself had never been
born. 20

Glend. I say the earth did shake when I was born.

Hot. And I say the earth was not of my mind,
If you suppose as fearing you it shook.

Glend. The heavens were all on fire, the earth did tremble.

Hot. O, then the earth shook to see the heavens on fire, 25
And not in fear of your nativity.
Diseased nature oftentimes breaks forth
In strange eruptions; oft the teeming earth

Is with a kind of colic pinch'd and vex'd
By the imprisoning of unruly wind 30
Within her womb, which, for enlargement striving,
Shakes the old beldame earth and topples down
Steeple and mossgrown towers. At your birth
Our grandam earth, having this distemp'rature,
In passion shook.

Glend. Cousin, of many men 35
I do not bear these crossings. Give me leave
To tell you once again that at my birth
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,
The goats ran from the mountains, and the herds
Were strangely clamorous to the frightened fields. 40
These signs have mark'd me extraordinary,
And all the courses of my life do show
I am not in the roll of common men.

Where is he living, clipp'd in with the sea
That chides the banks of England, Scotland, Wales, 45
Which calls me pupil or hath read to me?
And bring him out that is but woman's son
Can trace me in the tedious ways of art
And hold me pace in deep experiments.

Hot. I think there's no man speaks better Welsh. I'll to dinner. 51

Mort. Peace, cousin Percy; you will make him mad.

Glend. I can call spirits from the vasty deep

Hot. Why, so can I, or so can any man;
But will they come when you do call for them? 55

Glend. Why, I can teach you, cousin, to command
The devil.

Hot. And I can teach thee, coz, to shame the devil—
By telling truth. Tell truth and shame the devil.
If thou have power to raise him, bring him hither, 60

And I'll be sworn I have power to shame him hence.
O, while you live, tell truth and shame the devil!

Mort. Come, come, no more of this unprofitable chat.

Glend. Three times hath Henry Bolingbroke made head
Against my power, thrice from the banks of Wye 65
And sandy-bottom'd Severn have I sent him
Bootless home and weather-beaten back.

Hot. Home without boots, and in foul weather too?
How scapes he agues, in the devil's name?

Glend. Come, here's the map. Shall we divide our right 70
According to our threefold order ta'en?

Mort. The Archdeacon hath divided it
Into three limits very equally.
England, from Trent and Severn hitherto,
By south and east is to my part assign'd; 75
All westward, Wales beyond the Severn shore,
And all the fertile land within that bound,
To Owen Glendower; and, dear coz, to you
The remnant northward lying off from Trent.
And our indentures tripartite are drawn; 80
Which being sealed interchangeably
(A business that this night may execute),
To-morrow, cousin Percy, you and I
And my good Lord of Worcester will set forth
To meet your father and the Scottish power, 85
As is appointed us, at Shrewsbury.

My father Glendower is not ready yet,
Nor shall we need his help these fourteen days.
[*To Glend.*] Within that space you may have drawn together
Your tenants, friends, and neighbouring gentlemen. 90

Glend. A shorter time shall send me to you, lords;
And in my conduct shall your ladies come,

From whom you now must steal and take no leave,
For there will be a world of water shed
Upon the parting of your wives and you. 95

Hot. Methinks my moiety, north from Burton here,
In quantity equals not one of yours.
See how this river comes me cranking in
And cuts me from the best of all my land
A huge half-moon, a monstrous cantle out. 100
I'll have the current in this place damm'd up,
And here the smug and silver Trent shall run
In a new channel fair and evenly.
It shall not wind with such a deep indent
To rob me of so rich a bottom here. 105

Glend. Not wind? It shall, it must! You see it doth.

Mori. Yea, but
Mark how he bears his course, and runs me up
With like advantage on the other side,
Gelding the opposed continent as much 110
As on the other side it takes from you.

Wor. Yea, but a little charge will trench him here
And on this north side win this cape of land;
And then he runs straight and even.

Hot. I'll have it so. A little charge will do it. 115

Glend. I will not have it alt'red

Hot. Will not you?

Glend. No, nor you shall not.

Hot. Who shall say me nay?

Glend. Why, that will I.

Hot. Let me not understand you then; speak it in Welsh 120

Glend. I can speak English, lord, as well as you;
For I was train'd up in the English court,
Where, being but young, I framed to the harp

'Many an English ditty lovely well,
And gave the tongue a helpful ornament— 125
A virtue that was never seen in you.

Hot. Marry,
And I am glad of it with all my heart!
I had rather be a kitten and cry mew
Than one of these same metre ballet-mongers. 130
I had rather hear a brazen canstick turn'd
Or a dry wheel grate on the axletree,
And that would set my teeth nothing on edge,
Nothing so much as mincing poetry.
'Tis like the forc'd gait of a shuffling nag 135

Glend. Come, you shall have Trent turn'd.

Hot. I do not care. I'll give thrice so much land
To any well-deserving friend;
But in the way of bargain, mark ye me,
I'll cavil on the ninth part of a hair. 140
Are the indentures drawn? Shall we be gone?

Glend. The moon shines fair; you may away by night.
I'll haste the writer, and withal
Break with your wives of your departure hence.
I am afraid my daughter will run mad, 145
So much she doteth on her Mortimer. *Exit.*

Mort. Fie, cousin Percy! how you cross my father!

Hot. I cannot choose. Sometimes he angers me
With telling me of the moldwarp and the ant,
Of the dreamer Merlin and his prophecies, 150
And of a dragon and a finless fish,
A clip-wing'd griffin and a moulten raven,
A couching lion and a ramping cat,
And such a deal of skimble-skamble stuff
As puts me from my faith. I tell you what— 155
He held me last night at least nine hours

In reckoning up the several devils' names
That were his lackeys. I cried 'hum,' and 'Well, go to!
But mark'd him not a word O, he is as tedious
As a tired horse, a railing wife; 160
Worse than a smoky house. I had rather live
With cheese and garlic in a windmill far
Than feed on cates and have him talk to me
In any summer house in Christendom.

Mort. In faith, he is a worthy gentleman, 165
Exceedingly well read, and profited
In strange concealments, valiant as a lion,
And wondrous affable, and as bountiful
As mines of India. Shall I tell you, cousin?
He holds your temper in a high respect 170
And curbs himself even of his natural scope
When you come 'cross his humour. Faith, he does.
I warrant you that man is not alive
Might so have tempted him as you have done
Without the taste of danger and reproof. 175
But do not use it oft, let me entreat you.

Wor. In faith, my lord, you are too wilful-blame,
And since your coming hither have done enough
To put him quite besides his patience.
You must needs learn, lord, to amend this fault. 180
Though sometimes it show greatness, courage, blood—
And that's the dearest grace it renders you—
Yet oftentimes it doth present harsh rage,
Defect of manners, want of government,
Pride, haughtiness, opinion, and disdain; 185
The least of which haunting a nobleman
Loseth men's hearts, and leaves behind a stain
Upon the beauty of all parts besides,
Beguiling them of commendation.

Hot. Well, I am school'd Good manners be your speed! 190
Here come our wives, and let us take our leave.

Enter *Glendower* with the *Ladies*.

Mort. This is the deadly spite that angers me—
My wife can speak no English, I no Welsh

Glend. My daughter weeps, she will not part with you;
She'll be a soldier too, she'll to the wars. 195

Mort. Good father, tell her that she and my aunt Percy
Shall follow in your conduct speedily.

*Glendower speaks to her in Welsh, and she answers
him in the same.*

Glend. She is desperate here. A peevish self-will'd harlotry,
One that no persuasion can do good upon.

The Lady speaks in Welsh.

Mort. I understand thy looks. That pretty Welsh 200
Which thou pourest down from these swelling heavens
I am too perfect in; and, but for shame,
In such a parley should I answer thee.

The Lady again in Welsh.

I understand thy kisses, and thou mine,
And that's a feeling disputation. 205
But I will never be a truant, love,
Till I have learnt thy language; for thy tongue
Makes Welsh as sweet as ditties highly penn'd,
Sung by a fair queen in a summer's bow'r,
With ravishing division, to her lute. 210

Glend. Nay, if you melt, then will she run mad.

The Lady speaks again in Welsh.

Mort. O, I am ignorance itself in this!

Glend. She bids you on the wanton rushes lay you down
And rest your gentle head upon her lap,
And she will sing the song that pleaseth you 215

And on your eyelids crown the god of sleep,
Charming your blood with pleasing heaviness,
Making such difference 'twixt wake and sleep
As is the difference betwixt day and night
The hour before the heavenly-harness'd team 220
Begins his golden progress in the East.

Mort. With all my heart I'll sit and hear her sing.
By that time will our book, I think, be drawn.

Glend. Do so,

And those musicians that shall play to you
Hang in the air a thousand leagues from hence, 225
And straight they shall be here. Sit, and attend.

Hot. Come, Kate, thou art perfect in lying down. Come,
quick, quick, that I may lay my head in thy lap. 229

Lady P. Go, ye giddy goose.

The music plays.

Hot. Now I perceive the devil understands Welsh;
And 'tis no marvel, he is so humorous.
By'r Lady, he is a good musician.

Lady P. Then should you be nothing but musical, for you are
altogether govern'd by humours. Lie still, ye thief, and hear the
lady sing in Welsh. 237

Hot. I had rather hear Lady, my brach, howl in Irish.

Lady P. Wouldst thou have thy head broken? 240

Hot. No.

Lady P. Then be still.

Hot. Neither! 'Tis a woman's fault.

Lady P. Now God help thee!

Hot. To the Welsh lady's bed. 245

Lady P. What's that?

Hot. Peace! she sings.

Here the Lady sings a Welsh song.

Come, Kate, I'll have your song too.

Lady P. Not mine, in good sooth. 249

Hot. Not yours, in good sooth? Heart! you swear like a comfit-maker's wife. 'Not you, in good sooth!' and 'as true as I live!' and 'as God shall mend me!' and 'as sure as day!' 253

And givest such sarcenet surety for thy oaths
As if thou ne'er walk'st further than Finsbury.

Swear me, Kate, like a lady as thou art,
A good mouth-filling oath; and leave 'in sooth'

And such protest of pepper gingerbread
To velvet guards and Sunday citizens.

Come, sing. 260

Lady P. I will not sing.

Hot. 'Tis the next way to turn tailor or be redbreast-teacher.
An the indentures be drawn, I'll away within these two hours;
and so come in when ye will. *Exit.*

Glend. Come, come, Lord Mortimer. You are as slow
As hot Lord Percy is on fire to go.

By this our book is drawn; we'll but seal,
And then to horse immediately.

Mort. With all my heart 269

Exeunt.

Scene II. [*London. The Palace*]

Enter the *King*, *Prince of Wales*, and others

King. Lords, give us leave. The Prince of Wales and I
Must have some private conference, but be near at hand,
For we shall presently have need of you.

Exeunt Lords.

I know not whether God will have it so,
For some displeasing service I have done,
That, in his secret doom, out of my blood

He'll breed revengement and a scourge for me;
But thou dost in thy passages of life
Make me believe that thou art only mark'd
For the hot vengeance and the rod of heaven 10
To punish my mistreadings. Tell me else,
Could such inordinate and low desires,
Such poor, such bare, such lewd, such mean attempts,
Such barren pleasures, rude society,
As thou art match'd withal and grafted to, 15
Accompany the greatness of thy blood
And hold their level with thy princely heart?

Prince. So please your Majesty, I would I could
Quit all offences with as clear excuse
As well as I am doubtless I can purge 20
Myself of many I am charg'd withal.
Yet such extenuation let me beg
As, in reproof of many tales devis'd,
Which oft the ear of greatness needs must hear
By smiling pickthanks and base newsmongers, 25
I may, for some things true wherein my youth
Hath faulty wand'red and irregular,
Find pardon on my true submission.

King. God pardon thee! Yet let me wonder, Harry,
At thy affections, which do hold a wing 30
Quite from the flight of all thy ancestors.
Thy place in Council thou hast rudely lost,
Which by thy younger brother is supplied,
And art almost an alien to the hearts
Of all the court and princes of my blood. 35
The hope and expectation of thy time
Is ruin'd, and the soul of every man
Prophetically do forethink thy fall.
Had I so lavish of my presence been,

So common-hackney'd in the eyes of men, 40
So stale and cheap to vulgar company,
Opinion, that did help me to the crown,
Had still kept loyal to possession
And left me in reputeless banishment,
A fellow of no mark nor likelihood. 45
By being seldom seen, I could not stir
But, like a comet, I was wond' red at;
That men would tell their children, 'This is he!'
Others would say, 'Where?' Which is Bolingbroke?'
And then I stole all courtesy from heaven, 50
And dress'd myself in such humility
That I did pluck allegiance from men's hearts,
Loud shouts and salutations from their mouths
Even in the presence of the crowned King.
Thus did I keep my person fresh and new, 55
My presence, like a robe pontifical,
Ne'er seen but wond' red at; and so my state,
Seldom but sumptuous, show'd like a feast
And won by rareness such solemnity.
The skipping King, he ambled up and down 60
With shallow jesters and rash bavin wits,
Soon kindled and soon burnt; carded his state;
Mingled his royalty with cap'ring fools;
Had his great name profaned with their scorns
And gave his countenance, against his name, 65
To laugh at gibling boys and stand the push
Of every beardless vain comparative;
Grew a companion to the common streets,
Enfeoff'd himself to popularity;
That, being daily swallowed by men's eyes, 70
They surfeited with honey and began
To loathe the taste of sweetness, whereof a little

More than a little is by much too much.
So, when he had occasion to be seen,
He was but as the cuckoo is in June, 75
Heard, not regarded—seen, but with such eyes
As, sick and blunted with community,
Afford no extraordinary gaze,
Such as is bent on sunlike majesty
When it shines seldom in admiring eyes; 80
But rather drows'd and hung their eyelids down,
Slept in his face, and rend'red such aspect
As cloudy men use to their adversaries,
Being with his presence glutt'd, gorg'd, and full.
And in that very line, Harry, standest thou; 85
For thou hast lost thy princely privilege
With vile participation. Not an eye
But is aweary of thy common sight,
Save mine, which hath desir'd to see thee more;
Which now doth that I would not have it do— 90
Make blind itself with foolish tenderness
Prince. I shall hereafter, my thrice-gracious lord,
Be more myself.
King. For all the world,
As thou art to this hour, was Richard then
When I from France set foot at Ravenspurgh; 95
And even as I was then is Percy now.
Now, by my sceptre, and my soul to boot,
He hath more worthy interest to the state
Than thou, the shadow of succession;
For of no right, nor colour like to right, 100
He doth fill fields with harness in the realm,
Turns head against the lion's armed jaws,
And, being no more in debt to years than thou,
Leads ancient lords and reverend bishops on

To bloody battles and to bruising arms. 105
What never-dying honour hath he got
Against renowned Douglas! whose high deeds,
Whose hot incursions and great name in arms
Holds from all soldiers chief majority
And military title capital 110
Through all the kingdoms that acknowledge Christ
Thrice hath this Hotspur, Mars in swathing clothes,
This infant warrior, in his enterprises
Discomfited great Douglas; ta'en him once,
Enlarged him, and made a friend of him, 115
To fill the mouth of deep defiance up
And shake the peace and safety of our throne.
And what say you to this? Percy, Northumberland,
The Archbishop's Grace of York, Douglas, Mortimer
Capitulate against us and are up. 120
But wherefore do I tell these news to thee?
Why, Harry, do I tell thee of my foes,
Which art my nearest and dearest enemy?
Thou that art like enough, through vassal fear,
Base inclination, and the start of spleen, 125
To fight against me under Percy's pay,
To dog his heels and curtsy at his frowns,
To show how much thou art degenerate
Prince. Do not think so You shall not find it so.
And God forgive them that so much have sway'd 130
Your Majesty's good thoughts away from me!
I will redeem all this on Percy's head
And, in the closing of some glorious day,
Be bold to tell you that I am your son,
When I will wear a garment all of blood, 135
And stain my favours in a bloody mask,
Which, wash'd away, shall scour my shame with it.

And that shall be the day, whene'er it lights,
That this same child of honour and renown,
This gallant Hotspur, this all-praised knight, 140
And your unthought-of Harry chance to meet
For every honour sitting on his helm,
Would they were multitudes, and on my head
My shames redoubled! For the time will come
That I shall make this Northern youth exchange 145
His glorious deeds for my indignities
Percy is but my factor, good my lord,
To engross up glorious deeds on my behalf;
And I will call him to so strict account
That he shall render every glory up, 150
Yea, even the slightest worship of his time,
Or I will tear the reckoning from his heart.
This in the name of God I promise here;
The which if he be pleas'd I shall perform,
I do beseech your Majesty may salve 155
The long-grown wounds of my intemperance.
If not, the end of life cancels all bands,
And I will die a hundred thousand deaths
Ere break the smallest parcel of this vow.
 King. A hundred thousand rebels die in this! 160
Thou shalt have charge and sovereign trust herein.

Enter Blunt

How now, good Blunt? Thy looks are full of speed.

Blunt. So hath the business that I come to speak of.
Lord Mortimer of Scotland hath sent word
That Douglas and the English rebels met 165
The eleventh of this month at Shrewsbury
A mighty and a fearful head they are,

If promises be kept on every hand,
As ever off' red foul play in a state.

King. The Earl of Westmoreland set forth to-day; 170

With him my son, Lord John of Lancaster;

For this advertisement is five days old.

On Wednesday next, Harry, you shall set forward,

On Thursday we ourselves will march. Our meeting

Is Bridgenorth; and, Harry, you shall march 175

Through Gloucestershire; by which account,

Our business valued, some twelve days hence

Our general forces at Bridgenorth shall meet.

Our hands are full of business. Let's away.

Advantage feeds him fat while men delay. 180

Exeunt.

Scene III. [*Eastcheap The Boar's Head Tavern*]

Enter Falstaff and Bardolph.

Fal. Bardolph, am I not fall'n away vilely since this last action? Do I not bate? Do I not dwindle? Why, my skin hangs about me like an old lady's loose gown! I am withered like an old apple John. Well, I'll repent, and that suddenly, while I am in some liking. I shall be out of heart shortly, and then I shall have no strength to repent. An I have not forgotten what the inside of a church is made of, I am a peppercorn, a brewer's horse The inside of a church! Company, villanous company, hath been the spoil of me. 12

Bard. Sir John, you are so fretful you cannot live long.

Fal. Why, there is it! Come, sing me a bawdy song; make me merry. I was as virtuously given as a gentleman need to be, virtuous enough: swore little, dic'd not above seven times a week, went to a bawdy house not above once in a quarter—of an hour, paid money that I borrowed—three or four times, lived

well, and in good compass; and now I live out of all order, out of all compass

Bard. Why, you are so fat, Sir John, that you must needs be out of all compass—out of all reasonable compass, Sir John 26

Fal. Do thou amend thy face, and I'll amend my life Thou art our admiral, thou bearest the lantern in the poop—but 'tis in the nose of thee. Thou art the Knight of the Burning Lamp. 30

Bard. Why, Sir John, my face does you no harm

Fal. No, I'll be sworn. I make as good use of it as many a man doth of a death's-head or a memento mori I never see thy face but I think upon hellfire and Dives that lived in purple; for there he is in his robes, burning, burning. If thou wert any way given to virtue, I would swear by thy face, my oath should be 'By this fire, that's God's angel.' But thou art altogether given over, and wert indeed, but for the light in thy face, the son of utter darkness. When thou ran'st up Gadshill in the night to catch my horse, if I did not think thou hadst been an ignis fatuus or a ball of wildfire, there's no purchase in money. O, thou art a perpetual triumph, an everlasting bonfire-light! Thou hast saved me a thousand marks in links and torches, walking with thee in the night betwixt tavern and tavern; but the sack that thou hast drunk me would have bought me lights as good cheap at the dearest chandler's in Europe. I have maintained that salamander of yours with fire any time this two-and-thirty years. God reward me for it! 55

Bard. 'Sblood, I would my face were in your belly!

Fal. God-a-mercy! so should I be sure to be heart-burn'd.

Enter *Hostess*.

How now, Dame Partlet the hen? Have you enquir'd yet who pick'd my pocket? 61

Host. Why, Sir John, what do you think, Sir John? Do you think I keep thieves in my house? I have search'd, I have en-

quired, so has my husband, man by man, boy by boy, servant by servant The tithe of a hair was never lost in my house before.

Fal. Ye lie, hostess Bardolph was shav'd and lost many a hair, and I'll be sworn my pocket was pick'd. Go to, you are a woman, go!

Host. Who, I? No, I defy thee! God's light, I was never call'd so in mine own house before! 72

Fal. Go to, I know you well enough.

Host. No, Sir John; you do not know me, Sir John. I know you, Sir John. You owe me money, Sir John, and now you pick a quarrel to beguile me of it. I bought you a dozen of shirts to your back. 78

Fal. Dowlas, filthy dowlas! I have given them away to bakers' wives; they have made bolters of them. 81

Host. Now, as I am a true woman, holland of eight shillings an ell. You owe money here besides, Sir John, for your diet and by-drinkings, and money lent you, four-and-twenty pound.

Fal. He had his part of it, let him pay 87

Host. He? Alas, he is poor, he hath nothing.

Fal. How? Poor? Look upon his face. What call you rich? Let them coin his nose, let them coin his cheeks. I'll not pay a denier. What, will you make a younker of me? Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn but I shall have my pocket pick'd? I have lost a seal-ring of my grandfather's worth forty mark 95

Host. O Jesu, I have heard the Prince tell him, I know not how oft, that that ring was copper!

Fal. How? the Prince is a Jack, a sneak-cup. 'Sblood, an he were here, I would cudgel him like a dog if he would say so. 101

Enter the *Prince* [and *Poins*], marching; and *Falstaff* meets them, playing upon his truncheon like a fife.

How now, lad? Is the wind in that door, i' faith? Must we all march?

Bard. Yea, two and two, Newgate fashion.

Host. My lord, I pray you hear me. 105

Prince. What say'st thou, Mistress Quickly? How doth thy husband? I love him well; he is an honest man.

Host. Good my lord, hear me.

Fal. Prithree let her alone and list to me. 110

Prince. What say'st thou, Jack?

Fal. The other night I fell asleep here behind the arras and had my pocket pick'd. This house is turn'd bawdy house; they pick pockets.

Prince. What didst thou lose, Jack? 115

Fal. Wilt thou believe me, Hal? Three or four bonds of forty pound apiece and a seal-ring of my grandfather's.

Prince. A trifle, some eightpenny matter.

Host. So I told him, my lord, and I said I heard your Grace say so; and, my lord, he speaks most vilely of you, like a foul-mouth'd man as he is, and said he would cudgel you.

Prince. What! he did not? 124

Host. There's neither faith, truth, nor womanhood in me else.

Fal. There's no more faith in thee than in a stewed prune, nor no more truth in thee than in a drawn fox; and for womanhood, Maid Marian may be the deputy's wife of the ward to thee. Go, you thing, go! 131

Host. Say, what thing? what thing?

Fal. What thing? Why, a thing to thank God on 134

Host. I am no thing to thank God on, I would thou shouldst know it! I am an honest man's wife, and, setting thy knight-hood aside, thou art a knave to call me so.

Fal. Setting thy womanhood aside, thou art a beast to say otherwise. 140

Host. Say, what beast, thou knave, thou?

Fal. What beast? Why, an otter.

Prince. An otter, Sir John? Why an otter?

Fal. Why, she's neither fish nor flesh; a man knows not where to have her. 145

Host. Thou art an unjust man in saying so. Thou or any man knows where to have me, thou knave, thou!

Prince. Thou say'st true, hostess, and he slanders thee most grossly. 150

Host. So he doth you, my lord, and said this other day you ought him a thousand pound.

Prince. Sirrah, do I owe you a thousand pound? 154

Fal. A thousand pound, Hal? A million! Thy love is worth a million; thou owest me thy love.

Host. Nay, my lord, he call'd you Jack and said he would cudgel you.

Fal. Did I, Bardolph? 160

Bard. Indeed, Sir John, you said so.

Fal. Yea, if he said my ring was copper.

Prince. I say 'tis copper. Darest thou be as good as thy word now? 164

Fal. Why, Hal, thou knowest, as thou art but man, I dare; but as thou art Prince, I fear thee as I fear the roaring of the lion's whelp.

Prince. And why not as the lion? 168

Fal. The King himself is to be feared as the lion. Dost thou think I'll fear thee as I fear thy father? Nay, an I do, I pray God my girdle break. 171

Prince. O, if it should, how would thy guts fall about thy knees! But, sirrah, there's no room for faith, truth, nor honesty in this bosom of thine. It is all fill'd up with guts and midriff. Charge an honest woman with picking thy pocket? Why, thou whoreson, impudent, emboss'd rascal, if there were anything in thy pocket but tavern reckonings, memorandums of bawdy houses, and one poor pennyworth of sugar candy to make thee long-winded—if thy pocket were enrich'd with any other in-

juries but these, I am a villain. And yet you will stand to it; you will not pocket up wrong. Art thou not ashamed? 184

Fal Dost thou hear, Hal? Thou knowest in the state of innocency Adam fell; and what should poor Jack Falstaff do in the days of villany? Thou seest I have more flesh than another man, and therefore more frailty. You confess then, you pick'd my pocket? 190

Prince. It appears so by the story.

Fal. Hostess, I forgive thee Go make ready breakfast. Love thy husband, look to thy servants, cherish thy guests. Thou shalt find me tractable to any honest reason. Thou seest I am pacified.—Still?—Nay, prithee be gone. (*Exit Hostess.*) Now, Hal, to the news at court For the robbery, lad—how is that answered?

Prince. O my sweet beef, I must still be good angel to thee The money is paid back again.

Fal. O, I do not like that paying back! 'Tis a double labour

Prince. I am good friends with my father, and may do anything 204

Fal Rob me the exchequer the first thing thou doest, and do it with unwash'd hands too

Bard. Do, my lord.

Prince. I have procured thee, Jack, a charge of foot. 209

Fal. I would it had been of horse. Where shall I find one that can steal well? O for a fine thief of the age of two-and-twenty or thereabouts! I am heinously unprovided. Well, God be thanked for these rebels. They offend none but the virtuous. I laud them, I praise them

Prince. Bardolph! 216

Bard My lord?

Prince. Go bear this letter to Lord John of Lancaster, To my brother John; this to my Lord of Westmoreland. 219

[*Exit Bardolph.*]

Go, Poins, to horse, to horse, for thou and I
Have thirty miles to ride yet ere dinner time.

[*Exit Poins.*]

Jack, meet me to-morrow in the Temple Hall
At two o'clock in the afternoon.

There shalt thou know thy charge, and there receive
Money and order for their furniture

225

The land is burning; Percy stands on high;

And either they or we must lower lie.

[*Exit*]

Fal. Rare words! brave world! Hostess, my breakfast, come.
O, I could wish this tavern were my drum!

229

Exit.

Enter *Harry Hotspur, Worcester, and Douglas.*

Hot. Well said, my noble Scot. If speaking truth
In this fine age were not thought flattery,
Such attribution should the Douglas have
As not a soldier of this season's stamp
Should go so general current through the world. 5

By God, I cannot flatter, I dety
The tongues of soothers! but a braver place
In my heart's love hath no man than yourself.
Nay, task me to my word; approve me, lord.

Doug. Thou art the king of honour. 10
No man so potent breathes upon the ground
But I will beard him.

Enter *one with letters.*

Hot. Do so, and 'tis well.—
What letters hast thou there?—I can but thank you.

Messenger. These letters come from your father.

Hot. Letters from him? Why comes he not himself? 15

Mess. He cannot come, my lord; he is grievous sick.

Hot. Zounds! how has he the leisure to be sick
In such a justling time? Who leads his power?
Under whose government come they along?

Mess. His letters bears his mind, not I, my lord. 20

Wor. I prithee tell me, doth he keep his bed?

Mess. He did, my lord, four days ere I set forth,
And at the time of my departure thence
He was much fear'd by his physicians.

Wor. I would the state of time had first been whole 25
Ere he by sickness had been visited.
His health was never better worth than now.

Hot. Sick now? droop now? This sickness doth infect
The very lifeblood of our enterprise.
'Tis catching hither, even to our camp 30
He writes me here that inward sickness—
And that his friends by deputation could not
So soon be drawn; nor did he think it meet
To lay so dangerous and dear a trust
On any soul remov'd but on his own 35
Yet doth he give us bold advertisement,
That with our small conjunction we should on,
To see how fortune is dispos'd to us;
For, as he writes, there is no quailing now,
Because the King is certainly possess'd 40
Of all our purposes What say you to it?

Wor. Your father's sickness is a maim to us.

Hot. A perilous gash, a very limb lopp'd off.
And yet, in faith, it is not! His present want
Seems more than we shall find it. Were it good 45
To set the exact wealth of all our states
All at one cast? to set so rich a main
On the nice hazard of one doubtful hour?
It were not good; for therein should we read
The very bottom and the soul of hope, 50
The very list, the very utmost bound
Of all our fortunes.

Doug. Faith, and so we should;
Where now remains a sweet reversion.
We may boldly spend upon the hope of what
Is to come in. 55
A comfort of retirement lives in this.

Hot. A rendezvous, a home to fly unto,
If that the devil and mischance look big
Upon the maidenhead of our affairs.

Wor. But yet I would your father had been here 60
The quality and hair of our attempt
Brooks no division It will be thought
By some that know not why he is away,
That wisdom, loyalty, and mere dislike
Of our proceedings kept the Earl from hence. 65
And think how such an apprehension
May turn the tide of fearful faction
And breed a kind of question in our cause.
For well you know we of the off'ring side
Must keep aloof from strict arbitrement, 70
And stop all sight-holes, every loop from whence
The eye of reason may pry in upon us.
This absence of your father's draws a curtain
That shows the ignorant a kind of fear
Before not dreamt of.

Hot. You strain too far. 75
I rather of his absence make this use
It lends a lustre and more great opinion,
A larger dare to our great enterprise,
Than if the Earl were here; for men must think,
If we, without his help, can make a head 80
To push against a kingdom, with his help
We shall o'erturn it topsy-turvy down
Yet all goes well; yet all our joints are whole.

Doug. As heart can think. There is not such a word
Spoke of in Scotland as this term of fear. 85

Enter Sir Richard Vernon.

Hot. My cousin Vernon! welcome, by my soul.

Ver. Pray God my news be worth a welcome, lord.
The Earl of Westmoreland, seven thousand strong,
Is marching hitherwards; with him Prince John

Hot. No harm. What more?

Ver. And further, I have learn'd 90

The King himself in person is set forth,
Or hitherwards intended speedily,
With strong and mighty preparation

Hot. He shall be welcome too. Where is his son,
The nimble-footed madcap Prince of Wales, 95
And his comrades, that daff'd the world aside
And bid it pass?

Ver. All furnish'd, all in arms;
All plum'd like estridges that with the wind
Bated like eagles having lately bath'd;
Glittering in golden coats like images, 100
As full of spirit as the month of May
And gorgeous as the sun at midsummer;
Wanton as youthful goats, wild as young bulls.
I saw young Harry with his beaver on,
His cushions on his thighs, gallantly arm'd, 105
Rise from the ground like feathered Mercury,
And vaulted with such ease into his seat
As if an angel dropp'd down from the clouds
To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus
And witch the world with noble horsemanship. 110

Hot. No more, no more! Worse than the sun in March,
This praise doth nourish agues. Let them come.
They come like sacrifices in their trim,
And to the fire-ey'd maid of smoky war
All hot and bleeding will we offer them. 115
The mailed Mars shall on his altar sit
Up to the ears in blood. I am on fire
To hear this rich reprisal is so nigh,
And yet not ours. Come, let me taste my horse,
Who is to bear me like a thunderbolt 120

Against the bosom of the Prince of Wales.
Harry to Harry shall, hot horse to horse,
Meet, and ne'er part till one drop down a corse.
O that Glendower were come!

Ver. There is more news.

I learn'd in Worcester, as I rode along, 125

He cannot draw his power this fourteen days.

Doug. That's the worst tidings that I hear of yet.

Wor. Ay, by my faith, that bears a frosty sound.

Hot. What may the King's whole battle reach unto?

Ver. To thirty thousand.

Hot. Forty let it be. 130

My father and Glendower being both away,

The powers of us may serve so great a day.

Come, let us take a muster speedily

Doomsday is near Die all, die merrily.

Doug. Talk not of dying. I am out of fear 135

Of death or death's hand for this one half-year.

Exeunt.

Scene II [*A public road near Coventry.*]

Enter Falstaff and Bardolph.

Fal. Bardolph, get thee before to Coventry; fill me a bottle of sack. Our soldiers shall march through. We'll to Sutton Co'fil' to-night.

Bard. Will you give me money, Captain?

Fal. Lay out, lay out 5

Bard. This bottle makes an angel.

Fal. An if it do, take it for thy labour; an if it make twenty, take them all; I'll answer the coinage Bid my lieutenant Peto meet me at town's end. 10

Bard. I will, Captain. Farewell.

Exit.

Fal. If I be not ashamed of my soldiers, I am a sous'd gurnet. I have misused the King's press damnably I have got, in exchange of a hundred and fifty soldiers, three hundred and odd pounds. I press me none but good householders, yeomen's sons; inquire me out contracted bachelors, such as had been ask'd twice on the banes—such a commodity of warm slaves as had as lieve hear the devil as a drum; such as fear the report of a caliver worse than a struck fowl or a hurt wild duck. I press'd me none but such toasts-and-butter, with hearts in their bellies no bigger than pins' heads, and they have bought out their services, and now my whole charge consists of ancients, corporals, lieutenants, gentlemen of companies—slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth, where the glutton's dogs licked his sores; and such as indeed were never soldiers, but discarded unjust serving-men, younger sons to younger brothers, revolted tapsters, and ostlers trade-fall'n; the cankers of a calm world and a long peace; ten times more dishonourable ragged than an old fac'd ancient; and such have I to fill up the rooms of them that have bought out their services that you would think that I had a hundred and fifty tattered Prodigals lately come from swine-keeping, from eating draff and husks. A mad fellow met me on the way, and told me I had unloaded all the gibbets and press'd the dead bodies. No eye hath seen such scarecrows I'll not march through Coventry with them, that's flat. Nay, and the villains march wide betwixt the legs, as if they had gyves on, for indeed I had the most of them out of prison. There's but a shirt and a half in all my company; and the half-shirt is two napkins tack'd together and thrown over the shoulders like a herald's coat without sleeves; and the shirt, to say the truth, stol'n from my host at Saint Alban's, or the red-nose innkeeper of Daventry. But that's all one; they'll find linen enough on every hedge.

Enter the *Prince* and the *Lord of Westmoreland*.

Prince. How now, blown Jack? How now, quilt?

Fal. What, Hal? How now, mad wag? What a devil dost thou in Warwickshire? My good Lord of Westmoreland, I cry you mercy. I thought your honour had already been at Shrewsbury

59

West. Faith, Sir John, 'tis more than time that I were there, and you too, but my powers are there already. The King, I can tell you, looks for us all. We must away all, to-night

Fal. Tut, never fear me. I am as vigilant as a cat to steal cream

65

Prince. I think, to steal cream indeed, for thy theft hath already made thee butter. But tell me, Jack, whose fellows are these that come after?

Fal. Mine, Hal, mine

69

Prince. I did never see such pitiful rascals

Fal. Tut, tut! good enough to toss; food for powder, food for powder. They'll fill a pit as well as better. Tush, man, mortal men, mortal men

West. Ay, but, Sir John, methinks they are exceeding poor and bare—too beggarly.

75

Fal. Faith, for their poverty, I know not where they had that, and for their bareness, I am sure they never learn'd that of me

Prince. No, I'll be sworn, unless you call three fingers on the ribs bare. But, sirrah, make haste. Percy is already in the field

Exit

Fal. What, is the King encamp'd?

West. He is, Sir John. I fear we shall stay too long. [*Exit*]

Fal. Well,

To the latter end of a fray and the beginning of a feast
Fits a dull fighter and a keen guest.

85

Exit.

Scene III. [*The rebel camp near Shrewsbury*]

Enter Hotspur, Worcester, Douglas, Vernon.

Hot. We'll fight with him to-night.

Wor. It may not be

Doug. You give him then advantage

Ver. Not a whit.

Hot. Why say you so? Looks he not for supply?

Ver. So do we.

Hot. His is certain, ours is doubtful.

Wor. Good cousin, be advis'd; stir not to-night. 5

Ver. Do not, my lord

Doug. You do not counsel well.

You speak it out of fear and cold heart

Ver. Do me no slander, Douglas By my life—

And I dare well maintain it with my life—

If well-respected honour bid me on, 10

I hold as little counsel with weak fear

As you, my lord, or any Scot that this day lives.

Let it be seen to-morrow in the battle

Which of us fears.

Doug. Yea, or to-night

Ver. Content.

Hot. To-night, say I. 15

Ver. Come, come, it may not be. I wonder much,

Being men of such great leading as you are,

That you foresee not what impediments

Drag back our expedition. Certain horse

Of my cousin Vernon's are not yet come up. 20

Your uncle Worcester's horse came but to-day;

And now their pride and mettle is asleep,

Their courage with hard labour tame and dull,
That not a horse is half the half of himself.

Hot. So are the horses of the enemy, 25
In general journey-bated and brought low.
The better part of ours are full of rest.

Wor. The number of the King exceedeth ours.
For God's sake, cousin, stay till all come in.

The trumpet sounds a parley.

Enter Sir Walter Blunt.

Blunt. I come with gracious offers from the King, 30
If you vouchsafe me hearing and respect.

Hot. Welcome, Sir Walter Blunt, and would to God
You were of our determination!
Some of us love you well; and even those some
Envy your great deservings and good name, 35
Because you are not of our quality,
But stand against us like an enemy.

Blunt. And God defend but still I should stand so,
So long as out of limit and true rule
You stand against anointed majesty! 40
But to my charge The King hath sent to know
The nature of your griefs; and whereupon
You conjure from the breast of civil peace
Such bold hostility, teaching his duteous land
Audacious cruelty. If that the King 45
Have any way your good deserts forgot,
Which he confesseth to be manifold,
He bids you name your griefs, and with all speed
You shall have your desires with interest,
And pardon absolute for yourself and these 50
Herein misled by your suggestion.

Hot. The King is kind; and well we know the King
Knows at what time to promise, when to pay.
My father and my uncle and myself
Did give him that same royalty he wears; 55
And when he was not six-and-twenty strong,
Sick in the world's regard, wretched and low,
A poor unminded outlaw sneaking home,
My father gave him welcome to the shore,
And when he heard him swear and vow to God 60
He came but to be Duke of Lancaster,
To sue his livery and beg his peace,
With tears of innocency and terms of zeal,
My father, in kind heart and pity mov'd,
Swore him assistance, and perform'd it too. 65
Now when the lords and barons of the realm
Perceiv'd Northumberland did lean to him,
The more and less came in with cap and knee;
Met him in boroughs, cities, villages,
Attended him on bridges, stood in lanes, 70
Laid gifts before him, proffer'd him their oaths,
Gave him their heirs as pages, followed him
Even at the heels in golden multitudes.
He presently, as greatness knows itself,
Steps me a little higher than his vow 75
Made to my father, while his blood was poor,
Upon the naked shore at Ravenspurgh;
And now, forsooth, takes on him to reform
Some certain edicts and some strait decrees
That lie too heavy on the commonwealth; 80
Cries out upon abuses, seems to weep
Over his country's wrongs; and by this face,
This seeming brow of justice, did he win
The hearts of all that he did angle for;

Proceeded further—cut me off the heads 85
Of all the favourites that the absent King
In deputation left behind him here
When he was personal in the Irish war.

Blunt. Tut! I came not to hear this.

Hot.

Then to the point.

In short time after he depos'd the King, 90
Soon after that depriv'd him of his life,
And in the neck of that task'd the whole state;
To make that worse, suff' red his kinsman March
(Who is, if every owner were well plac'd,
Indeed his king) to be engag'd in Wales, 95
There without ransom to lie forfeited;
Disgrac'd me in my happy victories,
Sought to entrap me by intelligence;
Rated mine uncle from the Council board;
In rage dismiss'd my father from the court; 100
Broke oath on oath, committed wrong on wrong;
And in conclusion drove us to seek out
This head of safety, and withal to pry
Into his title, the which we find
Too indirect for long continuance. 105

Blunt. Shall I return this answer to the King?

Hot. Not so, Sir Walter. We'll withdraw awhile.

Go to the King; and let there be impawn'd
Some surety for a safe return again,
And in the morning early shall mine uncle 110
Bring him our purposes; and so farewell.

Blunt. I would you would accept of grace and love.

Hot. And may be so we shall.

Blunt.

Pray God you do.

Exeunt.

Scene IV. [*York. The Archbishop's Palace.*]

Enter the *Archbishop of York* and *Sir Michael*.

Arch. Hie, good Sir Michael; bear this sealed brief
With winged haste to the Lord Marshal;
This to my cousin Scroop; and all the rest
To whom they are directed. If you knew
How much they do import, you would make haste. 5

Sir M. My good lord,
I guess their tenour.

Arch. Like enough you do.
To-morrow, good Sir Michael, is a day
Wherein the fortune of ten thousand men
Must bide the touch; for, sir, at Shrewsbury, 10
As I am truly given to understand,
The King with mighty and quick-raised power
Meets with Lord Harry; and I fear, Sir Michael,
What with the sickness of Northumberland,
Whose power was in the first proportion, 15
And what with Owen Glendower's absence thence,
Who with them was a rated sinew too
And comes not in, overrul'd by prophecies—
I fear the power of Percy is too weak
To wage an instant trial with the King 20

Sir M. Why, my good lord, you need not fear;
There is Douglas and Lord Mortimer

Arch. No, Mortimer is not there

Sir M. But there is Mordake, Vernon, Lord Harry Percy,
And there is my Lord of Worcester, and a head 25
Of gallant warriors, noble gentlemen.

Arch. And so there is; but yet the King hath drawn
The special head of all the land together—

The Prince of Wales, Lord John of Lancaster,
The noble Westmoreland and warlike Blunt, 30
And many moe corrivals and dear men
Of estimation and command in arms.

Sir M. Doubt not, my lord, they shall be well oppos'd.

Arch. I hope no less, yet needful 'tis to fear;
And, to prevent the worst, Sir Michael, speed. 35
For if Lord Percy thrive not, ere the King
Dismiss his power, he means to visit us,
For he hath heard of our confederacy,
And 'tis but wisdom to make strong against him.
Therefore make haste I must go write again 40
To other friends; and so farewell, Sir Michael.

Exeunt

ACT V. Scene I. [*The King's camp near Shrewsbury.*]

Enter the *King, Prince of Wales, Lord John of Lancaster,*
Sir Walter Blunt, Falstaff.

King. How bloodily the sun begins to peer
Above yon busky hill! The day looks pale
At his distemp'rature.

Prince. The southern wind
Doth play the trumpet to his purposes
And by his hollow whistling in the leaves 5
Foretells a tempest and a blust'ring day.

King. Then with the losers let it sympathize,
For nothing can seem foul to those that win.

The trumpet sounds. Enter Worcester [and Vernon].

How now, my Lord of Worcester? 'Tis not well
That you and I should meet upon such terms 10
As now we meet. You have deceiv'd our trust
And made us doff our easy robes of peace
To crush our old limbs in ungentle steel.
This is not well, my lord; this is not well.
What say you to it? Will you again unknit 15
This churlish knot of all-abhorred war,
And move in that obedient orb again
Where you did give a fair and natural light,
And be no more an exhal'd meteor,
A prodigy of fear, and a portent 20
Of broached mischief to the unborn times?

Wor. Hear me, my liege.
For mine own part, I could be well content
To entertain the lag-end of my life
With quiet hours; for I do protest 25
I have not sought the day of this dislike.

King. You have not sought it! How comes it then?

Fal. Rebellion lay in his way, and he found it.

Prince. Peace, chewet, peace!

Wor. It pleas'd your Majesty to turn your looks 30

Of favour from myself and all our house;

And yet I must remember you, my lord,

We were the first and dearest of your friends.

For you my staff of office did I break

In Richard's time, and posted day and night 35

To meet you on the way and kiss your hand

When yet you were in place and in account

Nothing so strong and fortunate as I.

It was myself, my brother, and his son

That brought you home and boldly did outdare 40

The dangers of the time. You swore to us,

And you did swear that oath at Doncaster,

That you did nothing purpose 'gainst the state,

Nor claim no further than your new-fall'n right,

The seat of Gaunt, dukedom of Lancaster. 45

To this we swore our aid. But in short space

It rain'd down fortune show'ring on your head,

And such a flood of greatness fell on you—

What with our help, what with the absent King,

What with the injuries of a wanton time, 50

The seeming sufferances that you had borne,

And the contrarious winds that held the King

So long in his unlucky Irish wars

That all in England did repute him dead—

And from this swarm of fair advantages 55

You took occasion to be quickly woo'd

To gripe the general sway into your hand;

Forgot your oath to us at Doncaster;

And, being fed by us, you us'd us so

As that ungentle gull, the cuckoo's bird, 60
Useth the sparrow—did oppress our nest;
Grew by our feeding to so great a bulk
That even our love durst not come near your sight
For fear of swallowing, but with nimble wing
We were enforc'd for safety sake to fly 65
Out of your sight and raise this present head,
Whereby we stand opposed by such means
As you yourself have forg'd against yourself
By unkind usage, dangerous countenance,
And violation of all faith and troth 70
Sworn to us in your younger enterprise.

King. These things, indeed, you have articulate,
Proclaim'd at market crosses, read in churches,
To face the garment of rebellion
With some fine colour that may please the eye 75
Of fickle changelings and poor discontents,
Which gape and rub the elbow at the news
Of hurlyburly innovation.
And never yet did insurrection want
Such water colours to impaint his cause, 80
Nor moody beggars, starving for a time
Of pell-mell havoc and confusion.

Prince. In both our armies there is many a soul
Shall pay full dearly for this encounter,
If once they join in trial. Tell your nephew 85
The Prince of Wales doth join with all the world
In praise of Henry Percy. By my hopes,
This present enterprise set off his head,
I do not think a braver gentleman,
More active-valiant or more valiant-young, 90
More daring or more bold, is now alive
To grace this latter age with noble deeds.

For my part, I may speak it to my shame,
I have a truant been to chivalry;
And so I hear he doth account me too. 95
Yet this before my father's Majesty—
I am content that he shall take the odds
Of his great name and estimation,
And will, to save the blood on either side,
Try fortune with him in a single fight. 100

King. And, Prince of Wales, so dare we venture thee,
Albeit considerations infinite
Do make against it. No, good Worcester, no!
We love our people well; even those we love
That are misled upon your cousin's part, 105
And, will they take the offer of our grace,
Both he, and they, and you, yea, every man
Shall be my friend again, and I'll be his.
So tell your cousin, and bring me word
What he will do. But if he will not yield, 110
Rebuke and dread correction wait on us,
And they shall do their office. So be gone.
We will not now be troubled with reply.
We offer fair; take it advisedly. *Exit Worcester [with Vernon].*

Prince. It will not be accepted, on my life. 115
The Douglas and the Hotspur both together
Are confident against the world in arms

King. Hence, therefore, every leader to his charge;
For, on their answer, will we set on them,
And God befriend us as our cause is just! 120

Exeunt. Manent Prince, Falstaff.

Fal. Hal, if thou see me down in the battle and bestride me,
so! 'Tis a point of friendship.

Prince. Nothing but a Colossus can do thee that friendship.
Say thy prayers, and farewell.

Fal. I would 'twere bedtime, Hal, and all well. 126

Prince. Why, thou owest God a death

[*Exit.*]

Fal. 'Tis not due yet I would be loath to pay him before his day. What need I be so forward with him that calls not on me? Well, 'tis no matter; honour pricks me on. Yea, but how if honour prick me off when I come on? How then? Can honour set to a leg? No. Or an arm? No. Or take away the grief of a wound? No. Honour hath no skill in surgery then? No. What is honour? A word What is that word honour? Air. A trim reckoning! Who hath it? He that died a Wednesday. Doth he feel it? No. Doth he hear it? No. 'Tis insensible then? Yea, to the dead But will it not live with the living? No. Why? Detraction will not suffer it. Therefore I'll none of it. Honour is a mere scutcheon—and so ends my catechism. *Exit.*

Scene II [*The rebel camp.*]

Enter Worcester and Sir Richard Vernon.

Wor. O no, my nephew must not know, Sir Richard,
The liberal and kind offer of the King.

Ver. 'Twere best he did

Wor. Then are we all undone.

It is not possible, it cannot be,
The King should keep his word in loving us 5
He will suspect us still and find a time
To punish this offence in other faults.
Suspicion all our lives shall be stuck full of eyes;
For treason is but trusted like the fox,
Who, ne'er so tame, so cherish'd and lock'd up, 10
Will have a wild trick of his ancestors.

Look how we can, or sad or merrily,
Interpretation will misquote our looks,
And we shall feed like oxen at a stall,
The better cherish'd, still the nearer death. 15
My nephew's trespass may be well forgot;
It hath the excuse of youth and heat of blood,
And an adopted name of privilege—
A hare-brain'd Hotspur, govern'd by a spleen.
All his offences live upon my head 20
And on his father's. We did train him on;
And, his corruption being ta'en from us,
We, as the spring of all, shall pay for all.
Therefore, good cousin, let not Harry know,
In any case, the offer of the King. 25

Enter *Hotspur* [and *Douglas*].

Ver. Deliver what you will, I'll say 'tis so.
Here comes your cousin.

Hot. My uncle is return'd.
Deliver up my Lord of Westmoreland.
Uncle, what news? 30

Wor. The King will bid you battle presently.

Doug. Defy him by the Lord of Westmoreland.

Hot. Lord Douglas, go you and tell him so.

Doug. Marry, and shall, and very willingly.

Exit

Wor. There is no seeming mercy in the King.

35

Hot. Did you beg any? God forbid!

Wor. I told him gently of our grievances,
Of his oath-breaking; which he mended thus,
By now forswearing that he is forsworn
He calls us rebels, traitors, and will scourge 40
With haughty arms this hateful name in us.

Enter Douglas.

Doug. Arm, gentlemen! to arms! for I have thrown
A brave defiance in King Henry's teeth,
And Westmoreland, that was engag'd, did bear it,
Which cannot choose but bring him quickly on. 45

Wor. The Prince of Wales stepp'd forth before the King
And, nephew, challeng'd you to single fight.

Hot. O, would the quarrel lay upon our heads,
And that no man might draw short breath to-day
But I and Harry Monmouth! Tell me, tell me, 50
How show'd his tasking? Seem'd it in contempt?

Ver. No, by my soul. I never in my life
Did hear a challenge urg'd more modestly,
Unless a brother should a brother dare
To gentle exercise and proof of arms. 55

He gave you all the duties of a man;
Trimm'd up your praises with a princely tongue;
Spoke your deservings like a chronicle;
Making you ever better than his praise
By still dispraising praise valued with you; 60
And, which became him like a prince indeed,
He made a blushing cital of himself,
And chid his truant youth with such a grace
As if he mast'rd there a double spirit
Of teaching and of learning instantly. 65

There did he pause; but let me tell the world,
If he outlive the envy of this day,
England did never owe so sweet a hope,
So much misconstrued in his wantonness.

Hot. Cousin, I think thou art enamoured 70
Upon his follies. Never did I hear
Of any prince so wild a libertine.

But be he as he will, yet once ere night
I will embrace him with a soldier's arm,
That he shall shrink under my courtesies. 75
Arm, arm with speed! and, fellows, soldiers, friends,
Better consider what you have to do
Than I, that have not well the gift of tongue,
Can lift your blood up with persuasion.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My lord, here are letters for you. 80

Hot. I cannot read them now —

O gentlemen, the time of life is sh^hrt!
To spend that shortness basely were too long
If life did ride upon a dial's point,
Still ending at the arrival of an hour. 85
An if we live, we live to tread on kings;
If die, brave death, when princes die with us!
Now for our consciences, the arms are fair,
When the intent of bearing them is just

Enter another Messenger.

Mess. My lord, prepare The King comes on apace. 90

Hot. I thank him that he cuts me from my tale,

For I profess not talking. Only this—
Let each man do his best; and here draw I
A sword whose temper I intend to stain
With the best blood that I can meet withal 95
In the adventure of this perilous day.
Now, Esperance! Percy! and set on.
Sound all the lofty instruments of war,
And by that music let us all embrace;

For, heaven to earth, some of us never shall 100
 A second time do such a courtesy.

Here they embrace The trumpets sound.
[Exeunt.]

[Scene III *Plain between the camps.*]

The *King* enters with his *Power*. Alarum to the battle. Then
 enter *Douglas* and *Sir Walter Blunt*.

Blunt. What is thy name, that in the battle thus
 Thou crossest me? What honour dost thou seek
 Upon my head?

Doug. Know then my name is Douglas,
 And I do haunt thee in the battle thus
 Because some tell me that thou art a king. 5

Blunt. They tell thee true.

Doug. The Lord of Stafford dear to-day hath bought
 Thy likeness; for instead of thee, King Harry,
 This sword hath ended him. So shall it thee,
 Unless thou yield thee as my prisoner. 10

Blunt. I was not born a yielder, thou proud Scot,
 And thou shalt find a king that will revenge
 Lord Stafford's death

They fight Douglas kills Blunt. Then enter Hotspur.

Hot. O Douglas, hadst thou fought at Holmedon thus,
 I never had triumph'd upon a Scot. 15

Doug. All's done, all's won Here breathless lies the King.

Hot. Where?

Doug. Here

Hot. This, Douglas? No. I know this face full well.
 A gallant knight he was, his name was Blunt;
 Semblably furnish'd like the King himself. 20

Doug. A fool go with thy soul, whither it goes!
A borrowed title hast thou bought too dear:

Why didst thou tell me that thou wert a king?

Hot. The King hath many marching in his coats. 25

Doug. Now, by my sword, I will kill all his coats;
I'll murder all his wardrop, piece by piece,
Until I meet the King.

Hot. Up and away!
Our soldiers stand full fairly for the day. 29

Exeunt.

Alarum Enter *Falstaff* solus.

Fal. Though I could scape shot-free at London, I fear the shot here. Here's no scoring but upon the pate Sott! who are you? Sir Walter Blunt There's honour for you! Here's no vanity! I am as hot as molten lead, and as heavy too God keep lead out of me! I need no more weight than mine own bowels I have led my rag-of-muffins where they are pepper'd. There's not three of my hundred and fifty left alive; and they are for the town's end, to beg during life But who comes here? 40

Enter the *Prince*

Prince. What, stand'st thou idle here? Lend me thy sword.
Many a nobleman lies stark and stiff
Under the hoofs of vaunting enemies,
Whose deaths are yet unreveng'd. I prithee
Lend me thy sword. 44

Fal. O Hal, I prithee give me leave to breathe awhile Turk Gregory never did such deeds in arms as I have done this day. I have paid Percy; I have made him sure

Prince. He is indeed, and living to kill thee.
I prithee lend me thy sword. 50

Fal. Nay, before God, Hal, if Percy be alive, thou get'st not my sword; but take my pistol, if thou wilt.

Prince. Give it me. What, is it in the case?

Fal. Ay, Hal. 'Tis hot, 'tis hot. There's that will sack a city.

The Prince draws it out and finds it to be a bottle of sack.

Prince. What, is it a time to jest and dally now? 57

He throws the bottle at him. Exit.

Fal. Well, if Percy be alive, I'll pierce him. If he do come in my way, so; if he do not, if I come in his willingly, let him make a carbonado of me. I like not such grinning honour as Sir Walter hath. Give me life, which if I can save, so; if not, honour comes unlook'd for, and there's an end. *Exit.*

Scene IV. [*Another part of the field.*]

Alarum. Excursions. Enter the King, the Prince, Lord John of Lancaster, Earl of Westmoreland.

King. I prithee,
Harry, withdraw thyself; thou bleedest too much.
Lord John of Lancaster, go you with him

John. Not I, my lord, unless I did bleed too.

Prince. I do beseech your Majesty make up, 5
Lest your retirement do amaze your friends.

King. I will do so.
My Lord of Westmoreland, lead him to his tent.

West. Come, my lord, I'll lead you to your tent.

Prince. Lead me, my lord? I do not need your help; 10
And God forbid a shallow scratch should drive
The Prince of Wales from such a field as this,
Where stain'd nobility lies trodden on,
And rebels' arms triumph in massacres!

John. We breathe too long. Come, cousin Westmoreland, 15
Our duty this way lies. For God's sake, come

[*Exeunt Prince John and Westmoreland*]

Prince. By God, thou hast deceiv'd me, Lancaster!
I did not think thee lord of such a spirit.
Before, I lov'd thee as a brother, John;
But now, I do respect thee as my soul. 20

King. I saw him hold Lord Percy at the point
With lustier maintenance than I did look for
Of such an ungrown warrior.

Prince. O, this boy
Lends mettle to us all! *Exit*

Enter *Douglas*.

Doug. Another king? They grow like Hydra's heads. 25
I am the Douglas, fatal to all those
That wear those colours on them. What art thou
That counterfeit'st the person of a king?

King. The King himself, who, Douglas, grieves at heart
So many of his shadows thou hast met, 30
And not the very King. I have two boys
Seek Percy and thyself about the field;
But, seeing thou fall'st on me so luckily,
I will assay thee. So defend thyself.

Doug. I fear thou art another counterfeit; 35
And yet, in faith, thou bearest thee like a king.
But mine I am sure thou art, whoe'er thou be,
And thus I win thee.

They fight. The King being in danger, enter Prince of Wales.

Prince. Hold up thy head, vile Scot, or thou art like
Never to hold it up again! The spirits 40

Of valiant Shirley, Stafford, Blunt are in my arms.
It is the Prince of Wales that threatens thee,
Who never promiseth but he means to pay

They fight. Douglas fleeth.

Cheerly, my lord. How fares your Grace?
Sir Nicholas Gawsey hath for succour sent, 45
And so hath Clifton. I'll to Clifton straight.

King. Stay and breathe awhile.

Thou hast redeem'd thy lost opinion,
And show'd thou mak'st some tender of my life,
In this fair rescue thou hast brought to me. 50

Prince. O God! they did me too much injury
That ever said I heark'ned for your death.

If it were so, I might have let alone
The insulting hand of Douglas over you,
Which would have been as speedy in your end 55
As all the poisonous potions in the world,
And sav'd the treacherous labour of your son.

King. Make up to Clifton; I'll to Sir Nicholas Gawsey.

Exit.

Enter Hotspur.

Hot. If I mistake not, thou art Harry Monmouth
Prince. Thou speak'st as if I would deny my name. 60

Hot. My name is Harry Percy.

Prince. Why, then I see

A very valiant rebel of the name.
I am the Prince of Wales; and think not, Percy,
To share with me in glory any more.
Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere, 65
Nor can one England brook a double reign
Of Harry Percy and the Prince of Wales.

Hot. Nor shall it, Harry; for the hour is come

To end the one of us; and would to God

Thy name in arms were now as great as mine! 70

Prince. I'll make it greater ere I part from thee,
And all the budding honours on thy crest
I'll crop to make a garland for my head.

Hot. I can no longer brook thy vanities.

They fight.

Enter Falstaff

Fal. Well said, Hal! to it, Hal! Nay, you shall find no boy's
play here, I can tell you. 76

Enter Douglas. He fighteth with *Falstaff*, who falls down as if
he were dead. [*Exit Douglas.*] The *Prince* killeth *Percy*.

Hot. O Harry, thou hast robb'd me of my youth!
I better brook the loss of brittle life
Than those proud titles thou hast won of me
They wound my thoughts worse than thy sword my flesh. 80
But thoughts the slaves of life, and life time's fool,
And time, that takes survey of all the world,
Must have a stop. O, I could prophesy,
But that the earthy and cold hand of death
Lies on my tongue. No, Percy, thou art dust, 85
And food for— [*Dies*]

Prince. For worms, brave Percy. Fare thee well, great heart!
Ill-weav'd ambition, how much art thou shrunk!
When that this body did contain a spirit,
A kingdom for it was too small a bound; 90
But now two paces of the vilest earth
Is room enough. This earth that bears thee dead
Bears not alive so stout a gentleman.
If thou wert sensible of courtesy,

I should not make so dear a show of zeal. 95
But let my favours hide thy mangled face;
And, even in thy behalf, I'll thank myself
For doing these fair rites of tenderness.
Adieu, and take thy praise with thee to heaven!
Thy ignominy sleep with thee in the grave, 100
But not rememb'rd in thy epitaph!

He spieth Falstaff on the ground.

What, old acquaintance? Could not all this flesh
Keep in a little life? Poor Jack, farewell!
I could have better spar'd a better man.
O, I should have a heavy miss of thee 105
If I were much in love with vanity!
Death hath not struck so fat a deer to-day,
Though many dearer, in this bloody fray.
Embowell'd will I see thee by-and-by; 109
Till then in blood by noble Percy lie. *Exit.*

Falstaff riseth up.

Fal. Embowell'd? If thou embowel me to-day, I'll give you leave to powder me and eat me too to-morrow. 'Sblood, 'twas time to counterfeit, or that hot termagant Scot had paid me scot and lot too. Counterfeit? I lie; I am no counterfeit. To die is to be a counterfeit; for he is but the counterfeit of a man who hath not the life of a man; but to counterfeit dying when a man thereby liveth, is to be no counterfeit, but the true and perfect image of life indeed. The better part of valour is discretion; in the which better part I have saved my life. Zounds, I am afraid of this gunpowder Percy, though he be dead. How if he should counterfeit too, and rise? By my faith, I am afraid he would prove the better counterfeit. Therefore I'll make him sure; yea, and I'll swear I kill'd him. Why may not he rise as well as I? Nothing confutes me but eyes, and nobody sees me. Therefore,

sirrah [*stabs him*], with a new wound in your thigh, come you along with me. 132

He takes up Hotspur on his back. Enter Prince, and John of Lancaster.

Prince. Come, brother John, full bravely hast thou flesh'd Thy maiden sword.

John. But, soft! whom have we here?
Did you not tell me this fat man was dead? 135

Prince. I did; I saw him dead,
Breathless and bleeding on the ground. Art thou alive,
Or is it fantasy that plays upon our eyesight?
I prithee speak. We will not trust our eyes
Without our ears. Thou art not what thou seem'st. 140

Fal. No, that's certain! I am not a double man; but if I be not Jack Falstaff, then am I a Jack. There is Percy. If your father will do me any honour, so; if not, let him kill the next Percy himself. I look to be either earl or duke, I can assure you.

Prince. Why, Percy I kill'd myself, and saw thee dead! 147

Fal. Didst thou? Lord, Lord, how this world is given to lying! I grant you I was down, and out of breath, and so was he, but we rose both at an instant and fought a long hour by Shrewsbury clock. If I may be believ'd, so; if not, let them that should reward valour bear the sin upon their own heads. I'll take it upon my death, I gave him this wound in the thigh. If the man were alive and would deny it, zounds! I would make him eat a piece of my sword

John. This is the strangest tale that ever I heard.

Prince. This is the strangest fellow, brother John.
Come, bring your luggage nobly on your back. 160
For my part, if a lie may do thee grace,
I'll gild it with the happiest terms I have.

A retreat is sounded.

The trumpet sounds retreat; the day is ours.
Come, brother, let's to the highest of the field,
To see what friends are living, who are dead.

165

Exeunt [Prince Henry and Prince John].

Fal. I'll follow, as they say, for reward He that rewards me,
God reward him! If I do grow great, I'll grow less; for I'll
purge, and leave sack, and live cleanly, as a nobleman should do.

Exit [bearing off the body].

Scene V. [*Another part of the field.*]

The trumpets sound. Enter the King, Prince of Wales, Lord John of Lancaster, Earl of Westmoreland, with Worcester and Vernon prisoners.

King. Thus ever did rebellion find rebuke.

Ill-spirited Worcester! did not we send grace,

Pardon, and terms of love to all of you?

And wouldst thou turn our offers contrary?

Misuse the tenour of thy kinsman's trust?

5

Three knights upon our party slain to-day,

A noble earl, and many a creature else

Had been alive this hour,

If like a Christian thou hadst truly borne

Betwixt our armies true intelligence.

10

Wor. What I have done my safety urg'd me to;

And I embrace this fortune patiently,

Since not to be avoided it falls on me.

King. Bear Worcester to the death, and Vernon too;

Other offenders we will pause upon.

15

Exeunt Worcester and Vernon, [guarded].

How goes the field?

Prince. The noble Scot, Lord Douglas, when he saw

NOTES

ACT I. Scene I.

King Henry, thinking that the civil war is finished, has called a council at London to consider the Crusade—the holy war that, in expiation for the death of King Richard, he has vowed to undertake. See *Richard II*, v, 6, 49, 50:

I'll make a voyage to the Holy Land
To wash this blood off from my guilty hand.

2-4. **Find we . . . remote:** Let us give frightened Peace a chance to breathe, though she must gasp for breath, and to speak pantingly of new wars to be undertaken on far-distant shores (in the Holy Land)—**stronds:** strands, regions.

5, 6. **No more . . . blood:** No longer shall our native land drink the blood of her own children, staining her lips therewith as she lets it enter (soak into) the soil.

8, 9. **with . . . of hostile paces:** with the tread of the steeds of troops at war with each other.

10, 11. **like the meteors . . . bred.** The substance of a meteor was thought to be a gas given out (exhaled) by the sky or by some heavenly body. See ii, 4, 351, 352; v, 1, 19; *Julius Caesar*, ii, 1, 44; *Romeo and Juliet*, iii, 5, 13. 'It is some meteor that the sun exhales.' Cf. Marlowe, 2 *Tamburlaine*, iv, 1 (ed. Dyce, I, 189):

I will persist a terror to the world,
Making the meteors (that, like armed men,
Are seen to march upon the towers of heaven)
Run tilting round about the firmament,
And break their burning lances in the air.

13. **close:** hand-to-hand combat.

14. **mutual:** united in a common purpose.

18. **his:** its. *His*, the old form of the genitive neuter (as well as masculine), is regular in Shakespeare, but *it's* and *its* occur a few times and *it* (without an ending) is sometimes used as a genitive.

19 As far as: for an expedition whose object is as far distant as.

21. **We.** The royal *we*. 'I, the King.'—**impressed.** The King speaks of himself as if he were a conscript, enlisted by compulsion. His *vow* is the conscripting authority.—**engag'd:** pledged.

22. **a power:** an army. Cf. i, 3, 296; iii, 1, 65, 85, iv, 1, 18, 126; iv, 4, 12, 15, 19, 37; v, 5, 34.

29, 30. **bootless:** useless.—**go.** **Therefore.** Both words are emphatic: 'There is no point in my telling you that it is my purpose to go; not for *that* reason is this meeting called, but to consider the necessary preparations.'

31. **gentle:** noble—**cousin.** The Earl was related to King Henry by marriage, but not his cousin in the limited modern sense. *Cousin* is used to indicate almost any relationship except that of direct descent.

32. **decree:** decide.

33–35. **this dear expedience:** the urgent promptitude of this important expedition. *This haste* repeats the idea.—**hot in question:** earnestly debated.—**limits of the charge:** estimates of the necessary cost.

36, 37. **all athwart:** quite across the path—i.e., so as to interrupt the course of our deliberations by unfavourable news.—**A post:** a messenger riding posthaste.

38. **Mortimer.** Shakespeare, following Holinshed, represents this to be Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March. In fact, it was the Earl's uncle, Sir Edmund Mortimer, who was captured by Glendower on June 22, 1402, and who married Glendower's daughter. Lady Percy was Sir Edmund's sister.

40. **irregular.** This adjective describes Glendower as engaged in 'guerrilla' warfare, as contrasted with a 'regular' army.

43. **corpse:** corpses.—**misuse:** abuse.

44, 45. **transformation.** A mild word for 'mutilation.' Cf. Holinshed: 'The shamefull villanie vsed by the Welshwomen towards the dead carcasses, was such as honest eares would be ashamed to heare, and continent toongs to speake thereof.'—**may:** can.

50, 51. **uneven:** rough, disconcerting.—**import:** signify.

52. **Holy-rood Day:** September the fourteenth, the day consecrated to the Holy Cross. The year was 1402.

53. **brave:** noble. Not so specific in sense as in modern usage. Cf. 1, 2, 72.—**Archibald:** Earl of Douglas.

54, 55. **approved:** of well-tested valour.—**Holmedon.** In Northumberland. *Homildon* is Holinshed's form. The place is now called Humbleton.

57. **artillery.** Cf. 1, 3, 63.

58. **shape of likelihood:** probable inference.

59. **them.** *News* was originally a plural (*res novae*).

60. **pride.** Synonymous with *heat*: 'intensity.'

62. **true-industrious:** sincerely devoted.

66. **smooth:** pleasant. Antithetic to *uneven* in l. 50.

69. **Balk'd in their own blood:** piled up in ridges and soaked in blood. A *balk* is the ridge between two furrows.

71. **Mordake.** He was the son of the Duke of Albany. Shakespeare was misled by a misprint in Holinshed.

77. **prince.** Emphatic: 'even a prince.'

78. **there.** Emphatic: 'by using that word *prince*.'

82. **plant:** tree.

83. **minion:** darling. Cf. *Macbeth*, 1, 2, 19. 'like valour's minion.'

85, 86. **riot . . . Harry.** This prepares us for the next scene.

87. **had exchang'd.** Ugly and deformed infants were often thought to be 'changelings'—impish creatures left by the fairies in exchange for the babies they had stolen and carried off to fairyland. Cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, II, 1, 23, and note.

89. **Plantagenet.** A surname of the royal family.

90. **would I have, etc.** i.e., I should insist on making the exchange.

91. **from:** depart from. Verbs of motion are often omitted.

92. **pride.** Emphatic.

93. **surpris'd:** captured.

94. **To his own use:** for his own profit—since he could gain much from their ransom.

95. **Mordake.** Steevens notes that Percy could not refuse Mordake to King Henry, since Mordake was of royal blood (nephew of the Scottish king) and therefore could be justly claimed by the King of England, whose vassal Percy was. With regard to the other prisoners, however, there was room for argument.

97. **Malevolent . . . aspects.** A metaphor from astrology. The *aspect* of a planet is the way in which it 'looks upon' one—either with a favourable or a malignant influence. 'Worcester is always, and under all circumstances, hostile to you and your interests.'

98, 99. **Which.** The antecedent is *teaching*—**prune himself.** This is explained by the phrase that follows. The figure comes from falconry. A hawk *prunes* himself when he prepares for action by arranging his feathers with his beak, pruning away such of them as are loose or broken.

101. **neglect:** disregard; lay aside The word does not carry the modern sense of *culpable* disregard or omission.

107. **Than out of anger can be uttered:** than can be spoken or carried out by us in the heat of anger. 'We must not act upon angry impulse, for this crisis requires calm deliberation.'

108. **liege:** liege lord—the sovereign to whom I owe allegiance.

Scene II.

This scene takes place in London at the Prince's residence—certainly not at the royal palace or at any tavern.

1-13. **sack.** The old name for sherry and similar wines.—**demand that truly . . . know:** ask that correctly which thou wouldst really know.—**of the day.** *Day* is emphatic. Prince Hal regards Falstaff as a night bird.—**taffeta:** a kind of silk.—**so superfluous:** so given to useless talk.—**to:** as to.

14-20. **you come near me:** you have scored a point on me. Literally, the phrase means 'have just missed hitting me' (in

fencing or sword play) —go by. A mild pun: (1) 'walk about by the light of'; (2) 'count time by'—for the *night* is the only time for us.—the seven stars: the Pleiades.—wand'ring knight: knight errant. The Knight of the Sun is the hero of a chivalric romance popular in Shakespeare's day. See *iii*, 3, 30, note —sweet. Very common as a mere synonym for 'dear.'—wag: rogue, fellow.—Grace. *Your grace* and *your Highness* were often used for 'your Majesty.' Falstaff's pun is obvious: 'You'll not have a bit of virtue or goodness'

23, 24. *my troth*: my faith —an egg and butter. For so slight a meal, Falstaff suggests, a very brief 'grace before meat' would suffice Cf. *ii*, 1, 65.

25. *roundly, roundly*: Speak out in plain terms—what is it you wish to ask me to do when I am King?

26. *Marry*. Originally an oath by the Virgin Mary, but used as a mere interjection.

27–31. *squires of the night's body*. A squire of the body was a personal attendant on a knight, but we are not forced to infer a pun on *knight* here —beauty. There may be a pun on *booty*. The sentence means little more than 'Do not allow us, who do good service on the highway by night, to be called thieves in plain terms when the day dawns'—Let us be: i.e., let us be called.—Diana: the moon goddess and the goddess of maidens.—Minions: favourites, darlings. Cf. *i*, 1, 83.—of good government: well-governed—i.e., well-behaved.—our . . . mistress the moon. Cowl compares George Wilkins, *The Miseries of Inforst Marriage*, 1607, sig. F2 v^o: 'The Moone, patronesse of all purse-takers.'—countenance: with a pun on *countenance* in the sense of 'authority,' 'authorization.'—we steal. Perhaps Falstaff pauses a moment before coming out with the outspoken word *steal*.

32–44. *it holds well*: what you say about our being 'governed by the moon' proves to be consistent with the facts of the case.—for proof: for instance; for example.—with swearing 'Lay by': by calling upon the traveller (with an oath) to 'hand over.' *Lay by* is, literally, 'lay aside,' 'lay down your luggage.'—

'Bring in': a call to the wine-waiter at the tavern.—the ladder: the ladder from the gallows platform to the *ridge*—the horizontal crossbar which formed the top of the structure. The culprit had to climb the ladder with the noose about his neck. Then it was pulled away from under him, or he was thrown off by the hangman, or, if he was especially courageous, he took the leap himself. We should remember that the punishment for robbery was hanging.

46. the tavern: the Boar's Head in Eastcheap. See l. 216.

47-49. *Hybla*: a mountain (and a town) in Sicily, famous in ancient times for its honey. Cf. *Julius Caesar*, v, 1, 34, 35.—my old lad of the castle. The character now dubbed Falstaff was called 'Sir John Oldcastle' in the play as originally written. See Introduction. A 'lad of the castle' was a slang term for a 'roisterer.' Why, we do not know.—a buff jerkin: a close-fitting jacket of buff-coloured leather, such as sheriff's officers wore.—of durance: of durable material. There was a kind of cloth called *durance*. Steevens cites *The Three Ladies of London* (Hazlitt's Dodsley, VI, 344). 'The tailor, that out of seven yards stole one and a half of durance'; *Comedy of Errors*, iv, 2, 33-36. 'A devil in an everlasting garment hath him—a fellow all in buff.' There is a pun on *in durance*, i.e., in confinement ('in base durance and contagious prison,' 2 *Henry IV*, v, 5, 36), but Falstaff sturdily refuses to see the joke. Cf. *Comedy of Errors*, iv, 3, 25-27.

50, 51. quips: witticisms.—quiddities: literally, 'subtle definitions.' The quiddity (*quidditas*) of a thing is 'that which it really is,' its 'what-ness.' Cf. the phrase 'I know what's what.' Here Falstaff uses the word in the general sense of 'a smart saying,' 'a fine-spun or subtle jest.'

55 a reckoning: an accounting.

64, 65. here apparent . . . heir apparent. *Here* and *heir* are both emphatic. This pun is so outrageous that Falstaff runs away from it without finishing his sentence, changing the subject with a hasty 'But.' The *heir apparent* is the 'manifest and certain heir to the throne'—the King's eldest son.

58, 69. **resolution**: the resolute courage shown by robbers—fubb'd. A variant of *fobb'd*. 'foiled'; 'made of no effect'; 'thwarted'—literally, 'made a fool of.'—**with**: by.—**antic**: buffoon.

72. **brave**: fine, magnificent. Cf. i, 1, 53, note. In *The Famous Victories*, the Prince promises Ned, one of his riotous companions, that he shall be Chief Justice. Ned replies, 'By gogs wounds, ile be the brauest Lord chiefe Iustice That euer was in England.'

75, 76. **have**. Emphatic.—**hangman**: executioner.

77 in **some sort**: in some ways.—**jumps with**: accords with; suits.—**humour**: fancy.

80, 81. **suits**. A pun on (1) suits (petitions) to the King for some substantial mark of royal favour and (2) suits of clothes. The clothes of the person executed were a perquisite of the executioner. Thus in Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, iii, 6, 44, 45 (ed. Boas, p. 50), Pedringano says to the hangman: 'Thou wouldst faine furnish me with a halter, to disfurnish me of my habit.' Cf. Heywood, *The Royal King and the Loyal Subject*, i (Pearson ed., VI, 17):

Were I a begger, I might be a Courtiers fellow;
Could I beg suites my Lord as well as you,
I need not goe thus clad

82, 83. **'Sblood**: God's blood—an oath by the blood of Christ.—**gib-cat**: a tomcat. *Gib* (a short form for *Gilbert*) was a common name for a cat of either sex. Cf. Peele, *Edward I*, ii, 2, 85: 'Ere Gib our cat can lick her ear.' 'As melancholy as a cat' was an old proverbial comparison. See Lyly, *Mydas*, v, 2 (ed. Fairholt, II, 60); Chapman, *An Humorous Day's Mirth*, 1599 (Pearson ed., I, 90); *The Man in the Moone*, 1609 (ed. Halliwell, Percy Society, p. 39)—a **lugg'd bear**. The slow lumbering gait of a bear gives one the impression of surly reluctance or weary discontent. Cf. *Lear*, iv, 2, 42: 'the head-lugg'd bear'

86. **the drone** . . . **bagpipe**: the dismal sound of the drone (bass pipe) of a bagpipe.

87. **a hare.** A hare sitting in its form was a symbol of melancholy. Alanus de Insulis, in the twelfth century, describes the hare as in a state of 'melancholy fear,' dreaming of the arrival of the hounds.¹ Cf. Etheredge, *The Comical Revenge*, iv, 6 (ed. Verity, p. 83): 'He looks as sullenly as a hare in her form'; Webster, *The White Devil*, iii, 3, 78 (ed. Lucas, I, 148): 'like your melancholike hare.' For hare's flesh as food see Tobias Venner, *Via Recta ad Vitam Longam*, 1620, p. 59. 'Hares flesh is of a very dry temper [i.e., quality], of a hard digestion, and breedeth melancholy more then any other flesh: . . . for it maketh a very dry, thicke, and melancholike bloud.'

88. **Moor Ditch.** A notoriously filthy ditch or open sewer just outside the city wall. It received drainage from the marshes called Moorfields. Cf. *The Penniless Parliament of Thredbare Poets*, 1608 (ed. Hindley, p. 3): 'We think it necessary . . . that all such as buys this book, and laughs not at it, before he has read it over, shall be condemned of melancholy, and be adjudged to walk over Moorfields, twice a week.' Malone quotes John Taylor, *The Pennyles Pilgrimage*, 1618, sig. D v^o: 'My body being tyred with Travell, and my minde attyred with moody, muddy Moore-ditch melancholly'

90-98 **comparative:** satirically comparative; given to making personal comparisons of a satirical kind. Cf. iii, 2, 67. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v, 2, 851-855:

The world's large tongue
Proclaims you for a man replete with mocks,
Full of comparisons and wounding flouts,
Which you on all estates will execute
That lie within the mercy of your wit;

Troilus and Cressida, i, 3, 192-194:

Sets Thersites,
A slave whose gall coins slanders like a mint,
To match us in comparison with dirt.

¹Illic lepus, melancholico arreptus timore, non somno, sed timoris sopore, perterritus, canum somniabat adventum' (*De Planctu Naturae*, ed. Thomas Wright, *Anglo-Latin Satirical Poets*, II, 442)

The old maxim 'Comparisons are odious' is a warning against this habit of speech. See *Much Ado*, III, 5, 18, and note.—**vanity**: vain worldly matters. Cf *Ecclesiastes*, xii, 8.—**a commodity**: a lot—**rated**: berated, scolded.

99, 100 **wisdom . . . regards it**. 'Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets. . . . I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded.' (*Proverbs*, i, 20, 24).

101. **damnable iteration**: a damnable trick of repeating what one says and giving it a satirical twist.

108, 109. **give over this life**: give up this way of living.—**an**: if—**a villain**: a low fellow; no gentleman.

112. **Zounds**. The same as 'Swounds. Literally (as still understood in Shakespeare's time) this is a tremendous oath: 'By God's wounds'—i.e., the wounds which Christ suffered on the cross. It is significant that the Folio omits 'Zounds,' in accordance with the statute of 1606 forbidding profanity on the stage—**An**: if.

113. **baffle me**. To *baffle* is to 'degrade from knighthood.' The offender was stripped of his armour and the shield with his coat of arms was turned upside down. Sometimes he was hanged in effigy, heels up. Cf. II, 4, 480. See Viscount Dillon, *Archaeological Journal*, LXX (1913), 183 ff. Cf. Jonson, *The Staple of News*, interact iv (Yale ed, p. 99): 'I would haue Master Pyed-mantle, her Graces herald, to pluck downe his hatchments, reuerse his coat-armour, and nullifie him for no Gentleman.'

116, 117. 'Tis no sin . . . vocation. A more or less proverbial perversion of a Biblical text: 'Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called' (*I Corinthians*, vii, 20). Cf. *Ephesians*, iv, 1: 'I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called' Cf. Dekker, *I Honest Whore* (Pearson ed. II, 49): 'If it be my vocation to sweare, every man in his vocation: I hope my betters swear and dam themselves, and why should not I?'

118. **Gadshill**. Gadshill is a hill on the Kentish road near Rochester. It was notorious for highway robbery. One of

the Prince's band in *The Famous Victories* (whose only name, so far as that play reveals, is *Ned*) is called *Gadshill* (i.e., highwayman) by Derrick, a comic character whom he has robbed. Shakespeare adopted the name for the most strictly professional of the band—**set a match**: made an appointment for a robbery—literally, for a match game. *Gadshill* is the *setter* (see II, 2, 53, note). Cf. Mabbe, *Celestina* (ed. *Tudor Translations*, p. 190): 'I feare mee, it is a false traine, a made match, and a trappe purposely set to catch us all.'

118-122. **if men were to be saved by merit**. Falstaff has in mind the doctrine that no man deserves salvation: if saved, men owe it to the grace of God.—'Stand!' Stand and deliver!—the highwayman's phrase in accosting the traveller whom he holds up.—**true**: honest.

123. **Good morrow**: good morning

124, 125. **Monsieur Remorse**: i.e., compassion, pity—the last name one would expect to be the cognomen of a robber.—**Sack and Sugar**. It was the fashion to sweeten sherry with a touch of sugar (cf. II, 4, 65, 66). Malone quotes Tobias Venner, *Via Recta ad Vitam Longam*, 1620, pp. 27, 28 'Sacke . . . doth vehemently and quickly heat the bodie . . . Some affect [i.e., prefer] to drink Sacke with sugar, and some without, and vpon no other ground, as I thinke, but that, as it is best pleasing to their palates. Sacke taken by itselfe is very hot and very penetratiue, being taken with sugar, the heat is both somewhat allayed, and the penetratiue quality thereof also retardated' Cf. Rowlands, *The Letting of Humours Blood*, 1600 (Hunterian Club ed., p. 28, cited by Wright): 'When signeur *Sacke & Suger* drinke-drown'd reeles.'

131, 132. **a breaker of proverbs**: one who violates the doctrine that proverbs teach. The Prince goes on to explain that Falstaff is a lost soul, since the proverb bids him 'give the devil his due.' This old saying (quoted in *Henry V*, III, 7, 126, 127) is merely an emphatic assertion of the principle that we should give *everybody* his due. Cf. *The Two Angry Women of Abington*, sc. IV (ed. Gayley, I, 572): 'Give every man his due, and

give him no more'; Cowley, *Discourse concerning the Government of Cromwell* (*Works*, ed 1681, p. 58): 'I had a mind . . . to give even the Devil (as they say) his right, and fair play in Disputation'; Fletcher, *The Loyal Subject*, I, 3 (ed. Dyce, VI, 17); Harington, *Nugae Antiquae*, ed Park, II, 141 'To give the Devill his right (as the proverb is).'

134 **keeping thy word**. Poinz implies that Falstaff has long ago renounced his fealty to God and given his soul to Satan by becoming a confirmed sinner

136 **cozening**: cheating Thus the Prince maintains that Falstaff's soul is lost in any case

137-146. **But**. Poinz turns aside from jesting and comes down to the serious business of the moment —**early**: i.e., four o'clock in the morning —**to Canterbury**: to the shrine of Saint Thomas of Canterbury (Thomas à Becket) in the cathedral —**vizards**: masks.—**lies**: lodges —**in Rochester**: on the road from London to Canterbury.—**bespoke**: engaged, ordered —**Eastcheap**: in London—the site of Falstaff's favourite tavern, kept by Dame Quickly The name means 'East Market'

149, 150. **Yedward**: Edward.—**hang you**: have you hanged.

151. **chops**: you fat-chops; you fat-jawed fellow.

155-159 **honesty**: honour Falstaff has in mind the proverb: 'There's honour among thieves'—**royal**. A royal was a gold coin worth ten shillings There is a pun on *stand for*: (1) 'be valued at'; (2) 'take your stand on the road to obtain (by robbery).'

160. **once in my days**: for once in my life Cf. Middleton, *The Widow*, v, I, 347, 348 (ed. Bullen, V, 230): 'I'll be mad Once in my days'

170-176. **Well, God give thee**, etc Falstaff assumes the manner of a preacher exhorting his congregation. There is no satire on the Puritans. He is merely burlesquing the style of pulpit oratory —**the poor abuses** . . . **countenance**: i.e. lack encouragement from men of high rank Falstaff parodies the regular complaint that good causes are not properly encouraged by the nobility

177, 178. **thou latter spring:** i.e., thou old fellow who still hast the feelings of a youngster. The idea is repeated in the next phrase; for *All-hallow* is All-hallows (All Saints) day, i.e., November first. *All-hallow summer*, then, is what we now call 'Indian summer.'¹ Cf. Webster, *The White Devil*, v, 1, 209 (ed. Lucas, I, 170). 'Ther's a Spring at Michaelmas [September 29], but 'tis a faint one'; the same, *The Devil's Law Case*, i, 1, 164 (II, 241): 'This latter Spring of yours'; Lancelot Andrewes, *Sermon preached before Queen Elizabeth*, 1598 (Oxford ed., I, 307): 'all summer withered and dry, and beginning to shoot out a little about Michaelmas spring'; *I Henry VI*, 1, 2, 131: 'Expect Saint Martin's summer, halcyon days.'

181. **Bardolph, Peto.** The Quartos and Folios have 'Haruey, Rossill.' Probably Harvey and Russell were the actors who took the parts of Bardolph and Peto.

188-194. In *The Famous Victories* the Prince takes a leading part in the attack. Shakespeare has so modified the adventure as to relieve him of the guilt of downright highway robbery.

196. **habits:** clothes, attire.—**appointment:** accoutrement.

202, 203. **sirrah.** A form of *sir*, used in familiar address. Poins is treating the Prince as a comrade—**cases of buckram:** close fitting suits of buckram—coarse cloth stiffened with glue.—**for the nonce:** for the occasion; for the express purpose. The phrase is a modification of *for then once* ('for that one time')—*then* being not the adverb *then* but a later form of the Anglo-Saxon *thæn* (dative of the demonstrative pronoun *that*, 'that').—**noted:** well-known.

204. **doubt:** fear.

205-214. **for:** as for.—**forswear arms:** renounce the profession of arms.—**incomprehensible:** unlimited, infinite.—**wards:** parries Cf. ii, 4, 214—**extremities:** extreme hazards.—**reproof:** disproof, refutation.

219-241. This soliloquy is in one respect quite out of accord

¹See Albert Matthews, *Monthly Weather Review*, 1902, pp 52 ff

with the Prince's character. It represents him as deliberately playing the part of a riotous youth in order that his 'reformation' may come as a surprise and thus win general applause. In fact, however, the soliloquy is merely Shakespeare's notice to the audience that they are not to be distressed by the Prince's actions. See Introduction

219, 220. **will awhile . . . idleness:** will continue to obey that fancy for freedom from restraint which leads me to share in your folly.

222. **contagious.** Pestilence was thought to be generated in fog, mist, and cloud. Cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, II, 1, 90- 'contagious fogs'; *Richard II*, III, 3, 85-87.

Yet know, my master, God omnipotent,
Is mustering in his clouds on our behalf
Armies of pestilence.

225. **wanted:** missed (in his absence).

231. **rare accidents:** things that happen seldom. The adjective suggests also the sense of 'choice,' 'excellent.' Malone compares *Sonnet* 52:

Therefore are feasts so seldom and so rare,
Since, seldom coming, in the long year set,
Like stones of worth they thinly placed are.

235. **hopes:** expectations.

236. **a sullen ground:** a dull-coloured background

238. **show more goodly:** appear more beautiful.

239. **foil:** a leaf (Latin *folium*) of metal, used in the setting for a gem.—**to set it off:** to make it appear the brighter by contrast.

240 **to:** as to.—**a skill:** a clever device.

241. **Redeeming time:** making up for time wasted.

Scene III.

The interval between this scene and scene 1 cannot be exactly determined. A week or two will suffice.

2, 3. **Unapt**: not ready, slow.—**found me**: found me out.

5, 6. **myself**: i.e., a king.—**my condition**: my natural disposition.

10. **liege**. See 1, 1, 108, note

13. **holp**: helped.—**portly**: stately. Cf. ii, 4, 463.

16. **Danger**: defiance.

17. **péremptory**: commanding, imperious

18, 19. **majesty . . . brow**: a king has never yet been able to bear the sight of a servant who showed him a frowning forehead. A *frontier* is the outwork of a fortification. Cf. ii, 3, 55.

20. **us . . . we**. The royal *we*. See 1, 1, 21

26, 27. **delivered**: reported—**envy . . . or misprision**: malice or mistake (on the part of your informant). Cf. v, 2, 67.

31. **dry**: thirsty.—**extreme**. Such dissyllabic adjectives are regularly accented on the first syllable when an accented syllable comes next in the verse.

33. **neat**: exquisite in his attire; foppish.

34, 35. **new reap'd**. Hotspur means merely that the beard had been newly trimmed—in contrast with the rough beard of a soldier.—**Show'd**: looked

36. **milliner**. This trade was carried on by men in old times.

38. **A pouncet box**: a pomander. This was a small box or jar filled with some perfume or aromatic substance and having a perforated cover. It was used for refreshment or to protect one's olfactory nerve from disagreeable odours. The modern smelling bottle (*vinaigrette*) is its direct descendant. Cardinal Wolsey used for a pouncet box an orange skin containing a sponge steeped in aromatic vinegar. For pictures of old pomanders see *Archæological Journal*, XXXI (1874), 337 ff.

40, 41. **therewith angry**: angry at having had the pouncet box taken away.—**took it in snuff**: showed that he (the nose) was offended. The pun is obvious. To *take* anything *in snuff* is to 'resent it strongly.' The phrase comes from the way in which some persons show anger—by drawing in the breath audibly through the nostrils. Cf. *King Lear*, iii, 1, 26; *Love's Labour's Lost*, v, 2, 22; *The Conflict of Conscience*, 1581, ii, 3 (sig.

C1j v^o): 'What Master Hypocrisie, will you take snuffe so soone?'—still: always.

44, 45. **corse**: corpse.—his nobility: his noble self.

47. **He questioned me**. This seems to mean not merely 'interrogated me' but 'insisted on talking to me', for to *question* often signifies 'talk'.

50. **To be**: at being. The infinitive depends on *smarting*.—**pest'rd with a popingay**: annoyed by the constant chatter of this senseless fop. *Pester* carries both the sense of 'annoy' and that of 'constant', 'unremitting'; for to *pester* often means to 'crowd'. Cf. *Hamlet*, 1, 2, 22: 'to pester us with message,' i e., 'to annoy us with frequent messages.' *Popingay* (or *popinjay*) is an old word for 'parrot'.

51. **Out of**: as the result of.—**Grief**: pain (from my wounds).

52. **neglectingly**: negligently; without thinking what I said—whether 'yes' or 'no.' Cf. l. 66.

56. **God save the mark!** God avert the evil omen! A phrase often used (like the Latin *absit omen*) when something unlucky or disastrous is mentioned (cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, III, 2, 53) or (as here) to express strong contempt: 'God help us! to think that such a fellow should presume to talk about warlike matters!' 'God bless the mark!' is also common (see *Merchant of Venice*, II, 2, 25). The original meaning of *mark* in these phrases is unknown.

57. **sovereignest thing**: best of all remedies.

58. **parmacety**: spermaceti. Cf. Barnabe Riche, *Riche his Farewell to Military Profession*, 1581 (Shakespeare Society ed., p. 154): 'The Doctor tooke sparmeceti, and such like thynges that bee good for a bruse, and recovered hymself in a shorte space.'

62. **tall**: sturdy and valiant. Cf. *Merry Wives*, II, 2, 11: 'good soldiers and tall fellows.'

63, 64. **guns**: cannon. The point he made was that warfare is no longer a glorious thing, as it was in the old days of hand-to-hand fighting before gunpowder was invented.—**soldier**. Trisyllabic.

66. **indirectly.** Hotspur uses this word as a synonym for 'neglectingly.' See l 52, note.

68. **Come current:** be accepted at its face value.

70-73. **circumstance.** Modern English would use the plural.—**had said:** may have said.—**all the rest:** all the other details that he has mentioned.

75, 76. **To do him wrong:** to do him an injury.—**impeach:** make subject to blame.—**so:** provided that.

77, 78. **yet.** The emphatic *yet*. 'after all,' 'when all is said and done.' Cf. l. 180, iv, l, 83.—**deny his prisoners:** refuse to surrender his prisoners to me.—**But:** except—**proviso and exception.** Synonymous

79. **we:** I, the King See i, 1, 21.—**straight:** straightway, immediately.

80-84 **brother-in-law . . . Mortimer . . . Earl of March.** See i, 1, 38, note.

86. **redeem . . . home:** ransom and bring home.—**a traitor:** because now in league with Glendower.

87, 88. **indent with fears:** make an indenture (a contract) with objects of fear (persons whom we have reason to fear).—**lost and forfeited.** Synonymous: 'when they have delivered themselves up to the enemy.'

92. **revolted:** rebellious

97. **Those mouthed wounds.** That wounds are mouths is a figure of speech which appealed strongly to Shakespeare. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, iii, 2, 229-231:

I tell you that which you yourselves do know,
Show you sweet Cæsar's wounds, poor poor dumb mouths,
And bid them speak for me,

Richard III, i, 2, 55, 56:

O gentlemen, see, see! Dead Henry's wounds
Open their congeal'd mouths and bleed afresh!

Between *Richard III* and *Julius Cæsar* there is an interval of about seven years.

100, 101. **confound:** spend.—**In changing hardiment:** in con-

tending hand to hand—showing their valour in single combat; literally, 'in exchanging valour'

102. **breath'd**: stopped to take breath. Cf. 11, 4, 14, 275; v, 4, 15, 47.

104, 105. **with**: by.—**fearfully**: in fright, in a panic. The river god was terrified by their fierce looks.

106. **crisp**: curled. Alluding to the rippling surface of a stream. Cf. *Tempest*, iv, 1, 130: 'Leave your crisp channels.'

108. **policy**: political trickery. Spoken with scornful emphasis. *Policy* is regularly applied (like *political* and *politician*) to chicanery in public affairs. Cf. l. 241.

109. **Colour her working**: give a false show of patriotism.

110. **Nor never**. Such double negatives are used (as in Anglo-Saxon and Greek) to strengthen the negation.

112. **with revolt**: by an accusation of having revolted from his allegiance to the English king. Hotspur is repudiating the King's phrase 'revolted Mortimer' (l. 92).

113. **dost belie him**: dost not tell the truth about him.

116. **alone**: in single combat

118. **sirrah**. Here used in scorn. See i, 2, 202, note.

119. **speak**. Emphatic: 'Let me not hear you even mention his name.'

121. **kind**: fashion, manner, way.

123. **license your departure**: give you our permission to depart.

125. **An if**: if. *An* is *and*. This passage shows how *an* came to be used in this sense.

126. **I will . . . straight**: I'll follow him at once.

128. **Albeit**: even if.

129. **choler**: anger.

130. **Speak**. Emphatic.

131. **Zounds**. See i, 2, 112, note.

132. **join**. Emphatic.

135. **But**: but that—i.e., if *that* is necessary in order to; if *that* is the only means by which I can.

137. **ingrate**: thankless. A strong synonym for 'ungrateful.'—

cank' red: malignant. From *cankre*, 'an eating sore,' 'a cancer or ulcer.'—**Bolingbroke.** Percy refuses to call him King and uses the family name.

140. **forsooth.** Literally, 'truly,' but used parenthetically as a mere interjection of ironical impatience. Compare our use of 'upon my word!' See iv, 3, 78.

141. **urg'd:** mentioned—not, pressed or insisted on

142. **wive's.** The old form of the genitive, still heard in rapid speech.

143. **an eye of death:** a deathly eye; an eye of mortal fear

145, 146. **proclaim'd . . . the next of blood:** proclaimed by Richard II as his nearest relative and therefore as heir to the crown. Shakespeare follows Holinshed. In fact, however, it was the father of Edmund, Earl of March—Roger, the fourth Earl—who was recognized by Parliament (in 1385) as heir presumptive.—**dead is.** The emphasis falls on *is*.

149. **Whose . . . pardon!** And for the wrongs we did him may God pardon us!

151. **intercepted:** interrupted—by the return of the banished Bolingbroke to England and the civil war that ensued.

152. **depos'd.** Richard's abdication took place on September 30, 1599. He died (or was murdered) in the following January.

155. **soft:** wait a moment,—literally, slowly. Cf. ii, 1, 40; v, 3, 31; v, 4, 134.

156. **my brother.** Roger, Earl of March, was Hotspur's brother-in-law. Edmund, the next Earl, was Roger's son. See i, 1, 38, note.

159. **wish'd him . . . starve.** See l. 89

162, 163. **detested:** detestable, hateful.—**murtherous subornation:** procurement of murder

165, 166. **second means.** Synonymous with *agents*.—**ladder.** Cf. i, 2, 43.

168, 169. **the line:** the rank.—**predicament:** category.—**Wherein you range:** in which you rank—are classed.—**under:** under the rule of.

173. **gage:** pledge, stake.—**them both:** both their nobility and their power —**in an unjust behalf:** in behalf of an unjust claim.

175, 176. **rose . . . canker.** The garden rose and the wild rose (thorn rose, dog rose, canker) are contrasted, to the disadvantage of the wild flower Cf *Much Ado*, i, 3, 28, 29: 'I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace', *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii, 2, 282: 'you canker blossom' The contrast, as expressed in the 54th *Sonnet*, is between the 'sweet odour' of the garden rose and the lack of 'perfumed tincture,' in the canker.

180. **yet.** Emphatic. Cf l. 77; iv, 1, 83.

183. **Revenge:** and may take vengeance for.—**disdain'd:** disdainful This is not a participle, but an adjective formed from the noun *disdain* by adding the termination *-ed* (meaning 'furnished with,' 'characterized by'). Cf. *aged*, *bearded*, *strong-armed*, *short-winded*, *booted and spurred*.

185. **answer:** pay, discharge.

189. **to your quick-conceiving discontents:** to your discontented state of mind, which will be on the alert to catch the meaning.—**discontents.** Abstract nouns are often pluralized when more than one person is referred to.

194. **If he fall in . . . swim!** If such a man fall in—why then, if he sinks we must wish him good-night, for he has shown himself a brave adventurer—or **sink or swim:** whether he sinks or swims,—literally, let him sink or let him swim The phrase is proverbial to express indifference to the outcome or to describe one who risks everything in one desperate act ('the last resort'). Cf. William Gray, *New Year's Gift to Somerset*, 1551, ll. 75, 76 (*Ballads from Manuscripts*, ed. Furnivall, I, 423):

Suche bloudes [i e., wild fellows] will brynge you to the pyttes bryncke;
Then chuse you whether you will swyme or syncke,

Peele, *Edward I*, iii, 3, 89 (ed Bullen, I, 117). 'Then live or die, . . . or sink or swim'; Chapman, *Monsieur D'Olive* (Pearson ed., I, 237). 'Come what can come to the State, sincke or

swimme, Ile be no more a father to it.' See also Apperson. *English Proverbs*, p. 574.

196. **So:** provided that.—**cross it:** cross its path.

200. **patience:** self-control. Trisyllabic.

201-205. In the Introduction to Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, the Citizen's wife calls on their apprentice Ralph to show his ability as an actor by speaking 'a huffing part'—i.e., one in the heroic vein. Ralph recites:

By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap
To pluck bright honour from the pale-fac'd moon,
Or dive into the bottom of the sea,
Where never fathom-line touch'd any ground,
And pluck up drowned honour from the pit of hell

204. **fathom line:** sounding line.—**fathom.** Because the depth is always reported in *fathoms*.

205. **pluck:** pull.

206. **So:** provided that; if only.—**redeem:** rescue.

207. **corrival:** sharer, associate. Cf. iv, 4, 31.

208. **this half-fac'd fellowship!** *Fellowship* is scornfully emphatic: 'this miserable necessity of sharing one's honour with others!'—**out upon:** a curse upon; away with.—**half-fac'd:** miserable,—literally, 'thin-faced,' 'cadaverous' Cf. 2 *Henry IV*, iii, 2, 283: 'this half-fac'd fellow.'

209, 210. **apprehends:** conceives; sees in his mind's eye—**figures:** figures of speech.—**the form:** the correct figure; the true meaning.—**attend:** attend to; give his mind to.

212. **I cry you mercy:** I beg your pardon. Cf. iv, 2, 57.

214. **a Scot of them:** a single one of those Scots.

216 **by this hand.** An idiomatic oath.

217. **my purposes:** my talk; what I say.

218. **I will.** *Will* is emphatic.

220. **to speak:** even to speak. Cf. i. 119.

226. **still:** ever, always.

228, 229. **All studies:** all my pursuits in life; all my interests.—**defy:** renounce.—**gall and pinch:** annoy, torment. *Gall* is, literally, to 'rub the skin off'—and so, to 'irritate.'

230. **sword-and-buckler.** In Shakespeare's time the rapier and dagger had replaced the sword and buckler as the weapons of a gentleman, and sword and buckler had come to be the arms carried by a servant or a person of low rank. Cf. *Quarrel between Hall and Mallerie*, ca. 1580 (*Miscellanea Antiqua Anglicana*, 1816, p. 13). 'Mallerie drew his rapier, and bad his man take him to his sworde and buckler.'

233. **ale.** Emphatic. Hotspur implies that the Prince never drinks wine with gentlemen, but associates only with low fellows whose drink is ale.

234, 235. **Farèwell:** fare ye well.—**better temper'd:** in a more favourable humour.

236. **wasp-stung:** nervous and irritable. The synonym 'impatient' gives a literal interpretation of the word. *Wasp-stung* is the reading of the First Quarto. The First Folio reads 'Wasp-tongu'd.' That the Quarto is right is proved by Hotspur's words in l. 240. See Textual Notes.

238. **Tying thine ear . . . own:** listening to nothing that is said by others but giving attention only to your own talk. Cf. Greene, *Ciceronis Amor*, 1589 (ed. Grosart, VII, 137, 138): 'Tully tyed the peoples eares to his tongue by his eloquence.'

240. **pismires:** ants.

241. **politician.** Common in this contemptuous sense.

242–247. Hotspur is so impatient that he cannot stop long enough to let his memory work.

244. **kept:** resided.

247. **'Sblood.** See i, 2, 82, note.

248. **Ravenspurgh:** on the coast of Yorkshire. See *Richard II*, ii, 1, 296; ii, 2, 51.

249. **At Berkeley Castle.** Northumberland patiently supplies the name. He knows that he must let Hotspur's excitement run its course. See *Richard II*, ii, 2, 118.

253. **'When . . . to age.'** Compare Bolingbroke's words in *Richard II*, ii, 3, 48: 'as my fortune ripens.'

254. **'gentle Harry Percy.'** Cf. *Richard II*, ii, 3, 45: 'gentle Percy.'—**gentle:** noble—as in *gentleman*.

255. **cozeners:** cheats. An unescapable pun. Cf. *Merry Wives*, iv, 5, 79.—**God forgive me!** Thus Hotspur begs pardon for his wild talk and his refusal to listen.

257, 258. **to it again . . . leisure:** Start again and keep on. We'll wait until you have a spare moment to listen to us.—**i' faith.** Emphatic.

259. **once more to:** to return to the subject—your Scottish prisoners.

260–262. **straight:** straightway, immediately.—**the Douglas' son:** Mordake. See i, 1, 71, note.—**mean:** means.—**powers:** troops. Cf. iv, 1, 132; iv, 2, 61.

269. **York.** Dissyllabic here. Cf. iii, 2, 119.

270, 271. **bears hard:** strongly resents.—**Bristow:** Bristol.—**the Lord Scroop:** William Scrope, Earl of Wiltshire, executed for treason in 1399. Holinshed erroneously represents him as the Archbishop's brother, and Shakespeare follows Holinshed.

272. **in estimation:** as a matter of conjecture.

275. **but** emphasizes the sense of *only*.

276. **occasion:** opportunity.

277. **do well:** succeed.

278. **Before . . . slip:** You're always letting the dogs loose before the game we are hunting has started to run.

279. **cannot choose but be:** cannot help being Cf. iii, 1, 148; v, 2, 45.

280, 281. **the power:** the armed forces. See i, 1, 22, note.—**ha?** The interrogative interjection *huh?*

282. **aim'd:** planned, projected.

284. **a head:** an armed force, an army. Cf. iii, 1, 64, iii, 2, 167; iv, 1, 80; iv, 3, 103; iv, 4, 25, 28; v, 1, 66.

285. **bear . . . can:** no matter how carefully we may conduct ourselves.

286. **in our debt:** for the help we gave him in winning the crown.

288. **home:** thoroughly, completely, in full. This sense comes from the idea of a *home thrust*, a sword thrust that reaches a vital spot.

294. **suddenly:** immediately

296 **our pow'rs at once:** all our forces together. See i, 1, 22, note.

300 **thrive:** be successful.

302 **fields:** battlefields.

ACT II. Scene I.

Stage direction. **Carrier:** a person whose business it is to transport merchandise—what we should call an 'expressman.'

1. **Heigh-ho!** A long yawning sigh.—**four by the day:** four o'clock in the morning.

2. **Charles' wain:** an old name for the group of stars which we usually call 'the Dipper.' *Charles' wain* means 'the wagon or chariot of Charlemagne (Charles the Great).' It is a corruption of *carl's* (churl's, countryman's) *wain*. The Latin name is *plaustrum*, 'wagon.'—**horse:** horses

5. **Anon:** presently; in a moment, coming. The regular reply to a call for a waiter or attendant. Cf. ii, 4, 32, note.

6, 7. **beat:** i.e., in order to soften the saddle.—**Cut:** the horse with a docked tail.—**flocks:** wisps of wool.—**in the point:** the point of the pack-saddle.—**jade:** nag.—**wrung:** sore from having the skin rubbed off by the saddle.—**the withers:** the ridge between a horse's shoulders. Cf. *Hamlet*, iii, 2, 253.—**out of all cess:** beyond all account; excessively.

8-12. **Peas and beans.** Used as food for horses—a cheap substitute for oats.—**dank:** damp.—**as a dog:** a common comparison.—**next:** nearest; quickest.—**the bots:** 'worms in the stomach of a horse' (Wright).—**house:** inn.—**Robin:** a familiar form (a so-called diminutive) of *Robert*.

16. **be.** Cf. i. 37. The subjunctive in indirect discourse is an old idiom. It does not indicate doubt. Cf. *Hamlet*, i, 1, 108, 'I think it be no other but e'en so.'

17. **a tench:** a kind of spotted fish.

18 **By the mass.** A common oath.

18, 19. **a king christen:** a Christian king. The Carrier implies that kings have the best of everything.—**the first cock.** The times of cockcrow were conventionally fixed as follows: first cock, midnight, second cock 3 A.M. (cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, iv, 4, 3, 4); third cock, an hour before day.

20–22 **a jordan:** a chamber pot.—**your chimney.** An indefinite use of the pronoun with no personal reference—hardly distinguishable from the article *the*. Cf. ii, 4, 82.—**chamber-lye:** urine.—**a loach:** a kind of fish, which the Carrier supposes is infested by parasites.

23 **come away:** come along.

24. **a gammon of bacon:** a leg of bacon; a ham.—**razes:** roots. Ginger, a favourite spice in old times, was imported and handled in the form of large roots. Cf. *Winter's Tale*, iv, 3, 50, *The Famous Victories*, sig. B2 v^o. 'Hee hath beaten and wounded my pack, and hath taken the great rase of Ginger, that bouncing Besse . . . should haue had.'

25. **Charing Cross.** A village at some distance from London on the way to Westminster. The growth of the city has absorbed it since Shakespeare's time.

26–35. **God's body!** An oath by the body of Christ (*corpus Christi*).—**as good a deed as drink:** as to take a drink. An old humorous comparison. Cf. ii, 2, 25; *Twelfth Night*, ii, 3, 135.—**to break the pate on thee:** of thee. To *break* one's *head* means merely to 'break the skin of the head' so as to draw blood,—not to 'fracture the skull.'—**villain.** A general term of contempt.—**faith:** trustworthiness.

37. **be.** Cf. i. 16.

40. **soft!** wait a moment! don't be in a hurry! Cf. i, 3, 155; v, 4, 134.—**a trick . . . that:** namely, *not* to lend thee my lantern.

44, 45. **Ay, when? canst tell?** An ironical phrase for a refusal. Cowl cites Heywood, *A Maydenhead Well Lost*, ii (Pearson ed., IV, 125):

Mounser. Your bottle quickly sirrah, come I say

Clown. Yes, when? can you tell? doe you thinke I am such an Asse, to part so lightly with my liquor?

—**quoth he?** Often used in scornful repetition of what one has said.—**Marry.** See 1, 2, 26, note.

46. **Sirrah.** See 1, 2, 202, note.

48. **Time enough . . . candle:** Either before dark or after dark. A humorously evasive answer. The Carriers are shrewdly suspicious of Gadshill.

51. **They will along with company:** They wish to travel with companions for safety's sake.—**great charge:** a large amount of money; or, in a more general sense, valuable baggage.

52. **chamberlain:** the man who has charge of guests' rooms at an inn. Cf. Chettle, *Kind-Harts Dreame*, 1592 (ed. Harrison, p. 41): 'I come vp to London, and fall to be some Tapster, Hostler, or Chamberlaine in an Inne.'

53. **At hand, quoth pickpurse?** 'Here I am, close by,' as the pickpocket said. An old slang phrase. It occurs, for example, in Nashe's *Pierce Penilesse*, 1592 (ed. Harrison, p. 81). Cf. *Narcissus*, 1602 (ed. M. L. Lee, l. 575): 'Ile bee at hand, kee [i.e., quoth] pickpurse'; Middleton, *The Black Book* (ed. Bullen, VIII, 27). 'The tyme was at hand, like a pickpurse.'

54. **That's even as fair as:** That's just as correct an answer as.

58. **holds current:** proves to be correct information

59-66. **a franklin:** a freeholder—not quite a gentleman in rank.—**the Wild of Kent:** the Weald (Forest) of Kent, a rich agricultural district, once wooded.—**marks.** A mark was two thirds of a pound sterling.—**auditor:** an officer who looks after public accounts.—**charge:** luggage.—**eggs and butter.** Cf. 1, 2, 24.—**presently:** at once.

67. **Saint Nicholas' clerks:** disciples of Old Nick; robbers, highwaymen. Cf. John Taylor the Water Poet, *A Complaint* (Works, 1630, Spenser Society ed., p. 178):

The Instruments of War are mute and dumbe now,
And stout experienc't valiant Commanders,
Are turn'd Saint Nicholas Clarks, & high-way standers;

Roxburghe Ballads (ed. Chappell, I, 61): 'Saint Nicholas Clarkes wil take a purse.' Saint Nicholas, noted for his early

piety, was the patron saint of children and schoolboys (see *Two Gentlemen*, iii, 1, 300, 301); but in the slang of Shakespeare's time he was regarded as the patron saint of robbers, probably because his name resembles that of the devil—Old Nick—which comes, apparently, from the Anglo-Saxon *nicor*, 'a water demon or monster,' 'a nixie' Piston, the clownish servant in the old play of *Soliman and Perseda*, seems actually to use *Saint Nicholas* as a synonym for the Devil (ii, 2, 312; Kyd, ed. Boas, p. 192)

70. **I'll none of it:** I don't care for it; I have no use for it.

76. **Troyans:** Trojans—a slang term for 'roisterers,' 'sports.' Wright quotes Kempe, *Nine Daies Wonder*, 1600 (ed. Harrison, p. 19): 'He was a kinde good fellow, a true Troyan.' Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v, 2, 639

79-91. **foot land-rakers:** fellows that wander about the country on foot; vagabond footpads—**long-staff sixpenny strikers:** low thieves, armed only with long cudgels, who will hold up a traveller for sixpence.—**mustachio purple-hued maltworms:** ale-drinkers whose long mustaches are stained purple by the beer they soak them in Cf. *2 Henry IV*, ii, 4, 362; *Jack Straw*, 1593, iii (sig. D, lf. 2 r^o, quoted by Steevens): 'You shall purchase the prayers of all the ale-wiues in the towne, for sauing a mault-worme and a customer to helpe away their strong ales'; Gabriel Harvey, *Three Letters*, 1580 (ed. Grosart, I, 72): 'a morning bookeworm, an afternoone maltworm.'—**nobility and tranquillity:** noblemen who live at their ease.—**great oneyers:** 'great ones, or as he terms them in merriment by a cant termination, great one-yers' (Johnson). For amusing attempts at emendation see Textual Notes.—**can hold in:** know how to keep their own counsel; are trustworthy comrades.—**speak sooner than drink:** call upon a traveller to 'stand and deliver'—and are even more ready to do so than they are to take a drink—**their boots:** their booty; their profit. The Chamberlain proceeds to make an easy pun on *boots*.

93. **in foul way:** in a miry road.

94. **liquor'd:** greased. Gadshill continues the pun on *boots*.

Cf. *The Returne from Parnassus*, III, 1 (ed. Macray, p. 27). 'The liquoring of boots for the houlding out of water' Possibly (for everything was possible for an Elizabethan punster) he is also thinking of bribery. To grease the 'itching palm' of an official was to 'anooint it with a bribe.' Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, iv, 3, 10; *King John*, II, 1, 589-592. An old story, very popular in the Middle Ages, tells of a poor woman who had been unable to get a hearing in a case that was before a judge. Somebody gave her a suggestion: 'Unless you anooint his hand, you won't get justice.' She understood the phrase literally, and, when next she went into the courtroom, 'cunctis ridentibus manus eius ungere coepit.' Explanations followed and the woman won her suit. See Thomas Wright, *Latin Stories* (Percy Society, 1842), p. 43; Jacques de Vitry, *Exempla*, ed. Crane, p. 15.

95. as in a castle. An idiomatic phrase for 'in perfect safety' Gadshill alludes to the name of his leader—Sir John Oldcastle. This was the name of the knight in the play as first written *Falstaff* was a substitute made before it was printed. See Introduction.—the receipt of fernseed: the formula which enables one to find the seed of ferns (which is almost invisible). It was an old belief that to carry fernseed gathered on St. John's Eve (June 23) made one invisible. See Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, ed. Hazlitt, I, 179, 180.

98. beholding: beholden, obliged, indebted

101. purchase: booty. Cf. III, 3, 41 'there's no purchase in money.'—true: honest.

103. 'homo' . . . men: and so we'll omit the adjective ('true' or 'false') and let my pledge stand in the form 'as I am a man.' Gadshill is quoting the definition of a *common* noun in Lily's *Latin Grammar*—the standard primary text book in Shakespeare's day and long after Cf. Nashe, *Piers Penlesse*, 1592 (ed. McKerrow, I, 187, 188): 'Newgate, a common name for al prisons, as Homo is a common name for a man or a woman' Gadshill implies that he is a *true man* (a *real* man), even if he is not *true* (honest).

105. muddy: muddle-headed, stupid. But the Chamberlain

has proved himself a match for Gadshill in this duel of wits. Cf. Heywood, *1 Edward IV*, II, 3 (Pearson ed., I, 34). 'that muddy braine of thine'; Brome, *The English Moor*, I, 1 (Pearson ed., II, 1). 'To shake this dull and muddy humor off'; *Hamlet*, II, 2, 594: 'A dull and muddy-mettled rascal.'

Scene II.

2, 3. **he frets like a gumm'd velvet.** A punning comparison. Velvet of inferior quality was treated with gum to give the pile an appearance of firmness. Such gummed velvet *fretted* quickly when used, i.e., the pile wore away, leaving bare spots. Silk (especially taffeta) was gummed to make it seem firm. Stevens cites Marston, *The Malcontent*, I, 1 (ed. Bullen, I, 210): 'I'll come among you, . . . as gum to taffeta, to fret, to fret.'—**close:** in concealment.

11, 12. **by the squire:** measured by the carpenter's 'square.'—**break my wind:** pant and wheeze like a wind-broken horse.

16-30. **medicines:** love potions, philtres. Falstaff is speaking whimsically, but belief in such magical prescriptions was almost universal in Shakespeare's time. See Kittredge, *Witchcraft in Old and New England*, 1929, Chap. IV.—**as good a deed as drink.** See II, 1, 33, note.—**true:** honest.—**varlet:** low rascal, scamp.—**when thieves . . . another.** Falstaff is thinking of the proverb, 'There is honour among thieves.' He gives the principle a comic application, as if fidelity were more to be expected of thieves than of honest men. See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, p. 308.—**Whew!** Falstaff tries to whistle in reply.

40, 41. **colt:** trick.—**uncolted:** deprived of thy horse.

43, 44. **I prithee.** Falstaff assumes a wheedling, coaxing tone, which he changes abruptly when the Prince refuses his request.

45. **Out.** An interjection of scornful rejection: 'Away with you!' The modern slang phrase 'Get out!' is a direct descendant. 'Go way' is used in the same sense by Chaucer. Cf. II, 4, 531.

46 **heir-apparent garters.** 'Alluding to the Order of the Garter, in which he was enrolled as heir apparent' (Johnson).

47-50. **peach:** give information.—**for this:** in revenge for this trick you've played on me—**ballads.** Ballads were the news sheets of Shakespeare's time and later. Every important or sensational event was instantly worked up in verse. Ballads were printed on single sheets (as broadsides) and were sung and peddled about the streets Cf *2 Henry IV*, iv, 3, 52; *Antony and Cleopatra*, v, 2, 215, 216; Cowl quotes Massinger, *The Parhament of Love*, iv, 5:

I will have thee
Pictur'd as thou art now, and thy whole story
Sung to some villanous tune in a lewd ballad,
And make thee so notorious to the world
That boys in the streets shall hoot at thee

—**is so forward:** goes so far—**and afoot too:** and especially when it keeps me on my feet.

52. **against my will:** for I should prefer to be on horseback.

53. **setter.** Gadshill is the *setter*—that member of the gang who collects information and makes arrangements for robberies. The dog called a *setter* gets his name for a similar reason Cf. i, 2, 118 'Now shall we know if Gadshill have set a match.' The tricks of London 'setters' are amusingly described by Robert Greene in *The Art of Conny-catching*, 1591.

55. **ye:** yourselves—**vizards:** masks.

60. **make us all:** make the fortunes of us all.

66. **be.** A good old form of the plural.

68. **us.** Emphatic. Falstaff is not a coward· he is merely grumbling, and he soon recovers his temper.

70. **John of Gaunt.** The Duke of Lancaster, so called because he was born at Gaunt (Ghent). Falstaff's pun was 'destiny unshunnable'; but it did not lack personal application, for Prince Hal was tall and thin. Cf. the exchange of epithets between the two in ii, 4, 267-274.

72. **the proof:** the test

78. **close:** in hiding Cf. l. 3.

80. **my masters.** Used in the vocative like 'gentlemen' now-a-days—**happy man be his dole:** may it be his lot (that which is *dealt* out to him by fate) to be a fortunate man! The *his* has no personal reference. Falstaff simply quotes an old formula for 'Good luck!' or 'May the best man win!' Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, i, 1, 144, 145: 'Happy man be his dole! He that runs fastest gets the ring'; *Merry Wives*, III, 4, 68, *Winter's Tale*, I, 2, 163; John Heywood, *Proverbs*, Part I, chap. III (*Woorckes*, 1562; Spenser Society ed., p. 7): 'Happy man happy dole.'

87-97. Falstaff acts the part of a *roarer* or *roaring boy*. See l. 118, note.

87. **villains:** low fellows—a general term of abuse and contempt, like *knaves* in ll. 89, 92.

89 **caterpillars.** The regular term for 'parasites' or persons who enrich themselves at others' expense—especially for corrupt officers of the government. Cf. *Richard II*, II, 3, 166: 'The caterpillars of the commonwealth'; Richard Williams, *Babington's Complaint*, ca. 1586, st. 25 (*Ballads from Manuscripts*, ed. Furnivall, II, 15): 'By the counsell of Caterpillers I wrought my decaye'; Richard Edwardes, *Damon and Pythias*, 1571 (Collier's Dodsley, I, 216):

The caterpillers of all courtes *Et fruges consumere nati*,
Parasites with wealth puft up, should not looke so hie,

The Defence of Conny-catching, 1592 (Grosart's Greene, XI, 51, 52): 'those Caterpillers that vndoe the poore, ruine whole Lordships, infect the common-wealth, and delight in nothing but in wrongfull extorting and purloyning of pelfe.'

91. **undone:** ruined.

92. **gorbellied:** fat-paunched, potbellied. The superlative adjective for corpulency. Cf. *The Weakest Goeth to the Wall*, ca. 1590, sig. B3 r^o: 'these thick skind heaue purs'd gorbellied churles'; Wager, *The Longer thou Livest the More Foole thou Art*, ca. 1568, sig. Fiii, lf. 2 v^o. 'Gregory gorbely the goutie'; Dekker, *The Wonderfull Yeare*, 1603 (ed Harrison, p 78):

'My gorbelly Host, that in many a yeare could not without grunting, crawle ouer a threshold but two foote broad.'

93. **chuffs**: rich curmudgeons, misers. Cf. Adlington, *The Golden Asse*, 1566, iv, 19 (ed *Tudor Translations*, p. 88): 'a rich Chuffe . . . who . . . dissembled his estate, and lived sole and solitary in a small coat [1 e., cottage].'
—**your store**: all you possess—**bacons**: fat fellows

96, 97. **grandjurors**. Men of some property were regularly chosen to serve on the grand jury.—**We'll jure ye**. *Jure* means nothing in particular. Such plays on words are still common in humorous threats. Wright compares *Merry Wives* (iv, 2, 190-196), where Falstaff enters disguised as old Mother Prat, the fortune-teller.

Mrs. Page. Come, Mother Prat. Come, give me your hand.
Ford. I'll prat her! (*Beats him*) Out of my door, you witch. I'll conjure you, I'll fortune-tell you!

98-101. **true**: honest—**argument**: a subject of conversation; something to talk about.

103. **Stand close!** Cf. ll 3, 78

106, 107. **there's no equity stirring**: there's no such thing as correct judgment in the world—neither I nor anybody else can judge a man's character

118. **How the rogue roar'd!** Poins refers to the vociferous swaggering of Falstaff in ll. 87-97. Cf. *Cymbeline*, v, 5, 293-295; *Henry VIII*, v, 4, 7. A *roarer* or *roaring boy* was a swaggering ruffian. Pistol plays the part admirably in 2 *Henry IV*, ii, 4, 166 ff. See the note on ii, 4, 284, 285.

Scene III

This scene is at Warkworth Castle in Northumberland, a stronghold belonging to Percy's father.

1, 2. Shakespeare does not inform us who was Hotspur's correspondent. The last few lines of the speech suggest that he was Dunbar, the Scottish Earl of March, for Holinshed says

that he urged the King to attack the rebels before their forces should 'too much increase.' Cf. iii, 2, 164 ff.—could be well contented: should be pleased.—house: family.

10-13. **unsorted:** unfit—for the counterpoise of: to counter-balance.—**hind:** peasant

15. **full of expectation:** a very promising plot

29. **my Lord of York:** the Archbishop

31. **all their letters to meet me:** letters from all of them promising to meet me.

33. **pagan:** because he has no faith in our project.

35, 36. **divide . . . buffets:** split myself in two and let the two halves have a boxing match.

39 ff. This interview between Percy and his wife may be profitably compared with that between Brutus and Portia. Lady Percy, though apparently rebuffed, learns all that she wishes to know. See the note on *Julius Caesar*, ii, 1, 233 ff.

44. **stomach:** appetite.—**golden sleep.** Cf. *Richard III*, iv, 1, 84: 'the golden dew of sleep'; *Titus Andronicus*, ii, 3, 26: 'a golden slumber'; *Pericles*, iii, 2, 23. 'the golden slumber of repose.'

50. **faint:** light—antithetic to *sound and dreamless*.

52. **manage:** manège, horsemanship.

55, 56. **palisadoes:** stakes set up as a defence.—**frontiers:** out-works of a fortification. Cf. i, 3, 19.—**basilisks . . . cannon . . . culverin.** Three grades of ordnance. The basilisk was the heaviest, the culverin the lightest.

63. **motions.** This combines the literal sense with the figurative—'emotions.'

65. **on some great sudden hest:** when about to undertake some great action to which they are suddenly called.—**portents:** ominous signs.

66. **heavy.** This combines two meanings 'weighty' and 'woful.'

74. **esperance!** 'Esperance ma comfote' ('Hope is my stay,' 'my reliance') was the motto of the Percys, and 'esperance' was their watchword and battle cry. See v, 2, 97.

81. **spleen.** What we now-a-days call 'nervousness' or 'excita-

bility.' The spleen was supposed to be the organ whose action causes sudden impulse, caprice, fits of irritation, irritability, etc. Cf. iii, 2, 125: 'the start of spleen'; v, 2, 19. 'A hare-brain'd Hotspur, govern'd by a spleen.'

84-86. **my brother.** See i, 1, 38, note.—**doth stir:** is in action—**title:** i.e., to the crown—**line:** to support.

90. **little finger.** Steevens quotes Geoffrey Fenton, *Tragical Discourses*, ix (ed. *Tudor Translations*, II, 102): 'No sortes of kysses or follyes in loue were forgotten, . . . no pinchyng by the lytle finger', *How a Man may Chuse a Good Wife*, 1602 (ed. Swaen, p. 15): 'And still my Loue I by the finger wroong.'

93. **Love?** Hotspur in his reply jumps back to what Lady Percy had said before he interrupted her by calling the servant (l. 68). This absent-minded trick of speech is burlesqued by Prince Hal in ii, 4, 113 ff.

95. **mammets:** dolls—like you—to **tilt with lips.** Cf. Mas-singer, *The Bondman*, i, 1:

One never train'd in arms, but rather fashion'd
To tilt with ladies' lips than crack a lance.

97. **pass them current:** make people take them as valid payment; make them the regular currency. The pun depends on the fact that a coin would not pass if it had a crack extending from the edge to a point inside the circle that surrounded the monarch's head or other device. The old coins had no milled edges and cracked easily. Hamlet makes a different pun (ii, 2, 448).—**Gods me.** A contraction of 'God save me!'

107. **whereabout:** about what; on what business.

112. **But yet a woman.** Men never tire of repeating Virgil's 'Varium et mutabile semper Femina' (*Æneid*, iv, 569, 570)—**for:** as for.

114. **Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know.** A stock jest for nearly two thousand years. It has been traced back to M. Annaeus Seneca.¹ Malone quotes Nashe, *The Anatomie of*

¹*Controversiae*, ii, 5 (13), 12: 'Nec tam magnum consilium . . . com-misi muliebri garrulitati, quae id solum potest tacere quod nescit.'

Absurditie, 1589 (ed. McKerrow, I, 14): 'Quis muliebri garrulitati aliquid committit, quae illud solum potest tacere quod nescit: who will commit any thing to a womans tatling trust, who conceales nothing but what shee knowes not?'¹ See Skeat's Chaucer, V, 206.

120. **of force:** perforce. Lady Percy, though she pretends to be not quite satisfied, has won the day. She knows that Hotspur is to ride away to-morrow, and he has not denied that her guess (ll. 84-86) is right.

Scene IV.

The place of this scene is fixed as Eastcheap by Prince Hal's words in i, 2, 216. In *The Famous Victories* the Prince and his companions go to 'the olde Tauerne in Eastcheape' after the robbery. The Boar's Head was a well-known tavern, and that it was Falstaff's favourite inn is clear from 2 *Henry IV*, ii, 2, 159-161.

1. **fat-room:** vat-room. *Fat* (Anglo-Saxon *fæt*) is the old form of the word *vat*.

4-6. **loggerheads:** blockheads.—**sworn brother.** The phrase comes from the old institution of brotherhood in arms. Two or more persons would take a solemn oath to stand by each other on all occasions as if they were 'born brothers.' Such comrades were known as *fratres jurati*. See Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale*.—**drawers:** the waiters who draw and serve the wine.

7-11. **christen.** See ii, 1, 19.—**take it . . . salvation:** take the oath 'as we hope to be saved.'—**Jack:** fellow.—**a Corinthian:** a sport. *Trojan* and *Ephesian* were also cant words for a 'boon companion.'—**a lad of mettle:** a fellow of the right sort—a **good boy.** Cf., in modern slang: 'one o' the boys.' *Good boys* (like *good fellows*) was a cant term for 'thieves.' Cf. *The Widow*,

¹Nashe erroneously refers his quotation to the *Epistle of Valerius to Rufinus*, a late Latin letter of unknown authorship (Migne's *Patrologia*, XXX, 254-261).

iv, 2 (Collier's Dodsley, XII, 279):

One of our fellows
Was took last night, we'll set him first at liberty,
And other good boys after him.

13-15. **when you breathe in your watering**: when you stop to take breath in your drinking. In drinking with a friend one was expected to drain his glass or tankard in one draught. *Watering* was a slang word for 'drinking.' Cf. Dekker, *The Wonderfull Yeare*, 1603 (ed. Harrison, p. 80): 'A Tinker came sounding through the Towne, mine Hosts house being the aunient watring place where he did vse to cast Anchor.'—**hem!** The sound of clearing one's throat. Sometimes it is an expression of contempt; sometimes a call of encouragement to activity or vigorous effort. For the former sense see Rowlands, *The Letting of Humours Blood*, 1600 (Hunterian Club ed., p. 27): 'If you finde it foolish, hisse and hemme.' For the latter (which seems to be the sense here), note Justice Shallow's reminiscence of the days when he 'heard the chimes at midnight' with Falstaff and other roisterers: 'Our watchword was "Hem, boys!"' (2 *Henry IV*, iii, 2, 231, 232).—**play it off**: drink it off. Boswell quotes Rowlands, *The Letting of Humours Blood*, 1600 (Hunterian Club ed., p. 75):

A pox of peecemeale drinking (William sayes)
Play it away, wee le haue no stoppes and stayes
Blowne drinke is odious, what man can disiest [i e., digest] it
No faythfull drunkard, but he doth detest it

Singer adds Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman*, 1622, p. 194: 'If he dranke off his cups cleanelly, took not his wind in his draught, spit not, left nothing in the pot, nor spilt any vpon the ground, he had the prize.' Compare Folly's song in Ford and Dekker, *The Sun's Darling*, iv, 1: 'Let him drink merrily. . . Play it off stiffly'

27-29. **action**: encounter. A synonym for *battle*.—**penny-worth of sugar**. 'The drawers kept sugar folded up in papers, ready to be delivered to those who called for sack' (Steevens) —

under-skinker: an assistant wine-waiter. To *skink* is to 'pour' (cf. German *schenken*).

32. **Anon:** immediately. The conventional answer of a servant or waiter when summoned. Cf. Lyly, *Sapho and Phao*, III, 2 (ed. Bond, II, 395):

Criticus. What man ere heard such hideous noyse?
Molus. O' thats the Vintners bawling Boyes,
Anon, Anon, the trumpets are,
 Which call them to the fearefull barre

Kempe (*Nine Daies Wonder*, 1600, ed. Harrison, p. 20), describing an innholder, remarks:

Anon anon and welcome friend,
 Were the most wordes he vsde to spend.

—**bastard:** a kind of sweet wine—the **Half-moon.** Rooms in inns had names instead of numbers. See 'the Pomgarnet' (Pomegranate) in l. 41.

37. **a precedent:** a joke worth imitating.

41. **Look down into:** go down and look into—**Pomgarnet:** Pomegranate. Cf. l. 32: 'the Half-moon.'

45. **to serve:** i.e., as an apprentice. The full term of apprenticeship at any trade was seven years.

50. **by'r Lady:** by our Lady—an oath by the Virgin Mary.—**for the clinking of pewter:** a long service to learn such a trade!

53. **thy indenture:** the contract under which you serve your master.

55. **books:** bibles.

61. **Michaelmas:** the feast of Michael the Archangel (September 29): an important holiday and one of the four quarter-days in the calendar.

74. **when thou wilt:** any time you wish,—i.e., never. Francis, we may be sure, is not such a fool as to take Prince Hal's promise seriously. He is used to the pranks of sportive gentlemen.

77 ff. **rob.** Spoken with emphasis and in a tone that startles Francis. After a slight pause, to let the word sink in, the Prince rattles off a description of the innkeeper as fast as he can speak.

Francis is too startled to recognize the portrait, and his confusion is made absolute by Prince Hal's reply to his 'Who do you mean?'

77-80. **leathern-jerkin:** wearing a leather jacket.—**not-pated:** with hair cut short. Gentlemen wore long hair. Compare Chaucer's description of the Yeoman 'A not heed hadde he' (*Prologue*, l. 109).—**agate-ring:** wearing a seal ring with an agate set in it.—**puke-stocking:** wearing dark-coloured woolen stockings. Gentlemen wore light-coloured silk stockings.—**caddis-garter.** Caddis was a kind of tape. Gentlemen wore elaborate garters of silk or some expensive material, often embroidered and sometimes having a gold clasp. Stockings reached to the knee, where the breeches came to an end. The garter was worn in plain sight.—**Spanish-pouch.** •The innkeeper wore some kind of pouch at his girdle to serve as a purse.

82-85. **your.** A lightly spoken *your* (with no personal application), equivalent to the indefinite *this*, which is still in colloquial use. Cf. II, 1, 21 —**your only drink:** the only drink worth mentioning; the best of all drinks. Cf. *As You Like It*, II, 7, 34. 'Motley's the only wear!'; III, 4, 12, 13: 'Your chestnut was ever the only colour.'—**doublet:** a close-fitting jacket.—**In Barbary . . . much.** The Prince is talking incoherent nonsense to mystify Francis. One is tempted to make sense of it, and perhaps Hal has some thought or other in the back of his mind: 'You'd better stick to your trade and learn to serve wine. If you rob your master, you'll become a fugitive. A white doublet like that you are wearing will not keep clean long; and if you take refuge in foreign parts like Barbary, you won't find much use for it there!'

89. **Away, you rogue!** And so this jest with the drawer comes to an end. Sentimental readers here and there feel that the Prince has treated the boy ill, but they need not distress themselves. When Francis grew up and became an innkeeper himself, we may be sure that he often told with intense self-satisfaction how he had once been on intimate terms with Prince Hal.—**amazed:** in a maze, utterly confused; dumbfounded Cf. *Mid-*

summer Night's Dream, III, 2, 344. 'I am amaz'd, and know not what to say.'

92. **Vintner.** Some think this was Dame Quickly's husband (III, 3, 64) since she was the hostess of the Boar's Head tavern. *Vintner* (literally 'wine dealer') sometimes means 'innkeeper,' 'host,' 'landlord'—sometimes 'manager of an inn,' 'head waiter,' or the like.¹ This seems to be the sense here.

97. **Anon, anon, sir.** Poins is imitating Francis.

100-102. **what cunning match . . . issue?** What is the clever purpose you have had in playing this game with the drawer? What is to be the outcome? What's the point of it all? Prince Hal informs Poins (and the audience) that there was *no point* except the mere fun of the game itself.

105-107. **I am now of all humours:** Why, it was just a whim of mine. I am in the mood to indulge any fancy that any man has ever had since the creation—**goodman Adam.** In calling Adam 'goodman' the Prince alludes to the old saying:

When Adam delved and Eve span,
Where was then the *gentleman*?

See *Hamlet*, v, 1, 36, 37, and note. Cf. Dekker, *The Wonderfull Yeare*, 1603 (ed. Harrison, p. 7): 'Though he haue no more *Gentilitie* in him than *Adam* had (that was but a gardner)'; Rowlands, *Hells Broke Loose*, 1605 (Hunterian Club ed., p. 15).
—**pupil:** youthful.

112. **parcel of a reckoning:** an item in a bill.

114. **me.** The 'ethical dative', which adds nothing to the sense but merely gives a colloquial tone. Cf. II, 223, 240.

120-122. Cf. Marlowe, *1 Tamburlaine*, III, 2 (ed. Dyce, I, 57):

How can you fancy one that looks so fierce,
Only dispos'd to martial stratagems?
Who, when he shall embrace you in his arms,
Will tell how many thousand men he slew.

—**a drench:** a medicinal draught.

¹For a good example see the lively tavern dialogue in Rowlands, *'Tis Merrie when Gossips Meete*, 1602 (Hunterian Club ed., pp. 41-45).

123. **brawn:** fat pig.

124. **Rivo!** A shout to encourage drinking. Many examples occur, but the origin is unknown Cf. Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, iv (ed. Dyce, I, 325)· 'Hey, rivo Castiliano! a man's a man', Marston, *What You Will*, II (ed. Wood, II, 252)· 'Rivo, drinke deep', Middleton, *Blurt, Master Constable*, I, 2, 202, 203 (ed. Bullen, I, 24) 'Cry, rivo hoh! laugh and be fat.'

127-131. **of: on.—nether-stocks:** stockings. The *upper stocks* are the breeches.—**Is there no virtue extant?** Is there no manly quality in existence?

134-136. **Titan:** the sun.—**Pitiful-hearted butter . . . sun!** Tender-hearted butter that melted into tears at the loving words of the sun! Cf. *Richard II*, III, 2, 108: 'As if the world were all dissolv'd to tears'; *3 Henry VI*, II, 3, 46: 'I, that did never weep, now melt with woe', *Othello*, v, 2, 349: 'the melting mood'—**If . . . compound:** if you ever did, then look at Falstaff and you will recognize him as exactly that compound—melting butter.

137 **lime.** 'Wine was doctored with lime to increase its dryness and make it sparkle in the glass. Cf. *Merry Wives*, I, 3, 14' (Cowl).—**sack—too!** Both words are emphasized *Too* indicates an additional grievance—besides that of which he has been complaining There is no emphasis on *this* 'You rogue' is addressed to Francis

140-148 **thy ways:** on thy way. *Ways* is an old adverbial genitive—a **shotten herring:** as thin as a herring that has discharged its roe Cf. Gabriel Harvey, *Pierces Supererogation*, 1593 (ed. Grosart, II, 130): 'as lank as a shotten herring', Gay, *The Beggars Opera*, III, 1: 'Thou lookest as if thou wert half starved, like a shotten herring'—**the while:** the times we live in—a **weaver.** Weavers were famous singers. Many of them came from the Low Countries and were dissenters—fond of psalm-singing. Cowl quotes D'Avenant, *The Wits*, I (Collier's Dodsley, VIII, 344):

She is more devout
Than a weaver of Banbury, that hopes
To intice Heaven, by singing, to make him lord
Of twenty looms

151 a **dagger of lath**: such as was carried by the Vice—the comic character in the old morality plays. Cf *Twelfth Night*, iv, 2, 130 ff.:

I am gone, sir,
And anon, sir,
I'll be with you again,
In a trice,
Like to the old Vice,
Your need to sustain,

Who, with dagger of lath,
In his rage and his wrath,
Cries 'aha!' to the devil
Like a mad lad,
'Pare thy nails, dad'
Adieu, goodman devil,

Henry V, iv, 4, 75, 76. 'this roaring devil i' th' old play that every one may pare his nails with a wooden dagger.'

172. **All is one for that**: That makes no difference.

182. **at half-sword**: in close combat.

186 **dealt better**: dealt better blows; wielded my sword better.

201. **the other**: Common as a plural.

212. **paid**: settled with; paid in full. Cf l. 241; v, 3, 48; v, 4, 113.—**buckram**. See i, 2, 202, note.

213, 214. **call me horse**. Cf *Twelfth Night*, ii, 3, 203: 'call me Cut' (i.e., a dock-tailed horse). The horse often serves as an example of stupidity, as in *Troilus and Cressida*, iii, 3, 125, 126: 'Heavens, what a man is there! A very horse, that has he knows not what', *Julius Caesar*, iv, 1, 29 ff.; *Much Ado*, i, 1, 68 ff.—**my old ward**: my accustomed trick of warding off a sword stroke. Cf Henry Porter, *The Two Angry Women of Abington*, sc. xi (ed. Gayley, I, 614): 'I have not fought this foure dayes, and I lacke a little practise of my warde.'—**Here I lay**. This was the way I stood. Falstaff strikes an attitude and acts the part. Cf. Lyly, *Sapho and Phao*, ii, 3, 9–11 (ed. Bond, II, 385): 'hee . . . that lyeth at a good warde, and can hit a button with a thrust.'

221. At about this point Falstaff (already suspicious) begins to feel pretty sure that the Prince has played him a trick. To

test the matter, and to provide himself with a good answer if his suspicions come true, he raises the number of his alleged assailants with every breath. He does not expect Hal and Poins to believe him in these absurdities. Thus he is ready—when the Prince reveals the facts—to retort: ‘Why, I knew all that before!’ with the implication ‘and that’s why I gave you such an absurd account of the whole affair. You might have guessed from my nonsensical story that I didn’t expect you to believe me.’

222–225. **afroft**: abreast.—**mainly**: strongly.—**me**. Ethical dative. See l. 114, note.—**target**: buckler.

230. **by these hilts**. The hilt of a sword, consisting of several parts, is often thus designated by a plural. To swear by one’s sword was a very old form of oath. Cf. *Hamlet*, i, 5, 147, and note.—**a villain**: a low fellow; **no gentleman**. Cf. i, 2, 113.

239. **Down fell their hose**. Poins puns on the word *points*—the name for the tagged laces that attached the hose (the breeches) to the doublet (the jacket).

244 **Kendal green**. Kendal in Westmoreland was celebrated for cloth manufacture.

251–253. **gross**: literally, ‘big,’ and so ‘obvious.’—**clay-brain’d**. Cf. ‘muddy’ in ii, 1, 105.—**knotty-pated fool**: blockhead.—**tallow-catch**. Apparently a variant form of *tallow-keech* a big lump of tallow, rolled up by the butcher to be sent to the chandler—the candle-maker. Steevens notes that ‘Goodwife Keech’ is the butcher’s wife in 2 *Henry IV*, ii, 1, 103. Cf. *Henry VIII*, i, 1, 55. Some think that *tallow-catch* means ‘a receptacle for tallow.’

261. **the strappado**. A kind of torture in which the victim was drawn up by a rope fastened to his arms and then let down with a jerk.

264. **reasons**. Pronounced like *raisins*.

267 **sanguine**: full-blooded. The old physiology ascribed four *humours* (liquids) to the body: blood, phlegm, choler (bile), and melancholy (black bile). One’s temperament depended on the preponderance of one or another of these humours: it was sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric, or melancholy. A

sanguine coward would be an unnatural creature, for a man of 'sanguine temperament' was expected to be high-spirited and courageous.

270-274 Cf. *How a Man may Chuse a Good Wife from a Bad*, 1602, ii (ed. Swaen, p. 34) 'That Rat, that shrimp, that spindleshank, that Wren, that sheep-biter, that leane chittiface, that famine, that leane Envy, that all bones, that bare Anatomy, that lack a Lent, that ghost, that shadow, that Moone in the waine.'—'Sblood See 1, 2, 82, note.—elf-skin. See Textual Notes.—stockfish: salt codfish or hake—standing tuck: rapier standing on its point. By this epithet Falstaff certainly wins the match of comparisons. 'This Prince Henrie exceeded the meane [i.e., medium] stature of men; he was beawtious of visage, his necke was longe, his body slender and leane, his boanes smale' (*Life of Henry V*, ca. 1513, ed. Kingsford, 1911, p. 16).

282-285. with a word: in a word; to make a long story short.—outfac'd you from your prize: deprived you of it by defiant force—roar'd . . . bullcalf. This is the only departure from accuracy in Prince Hal's story Falstaff's 'roaring' was certainly not 'for mercy.' See the note on 11, 2, 118

291, 292. starting hole: a hole into which one darts for safety (like a rat or a mouse); a refuge. Cf. Bacon, *A True Report of the Treason of Dr. Lopez* (ed. Spedding, I, 283) 'Lopez . . . thought to provide for himself . . . as many starting-holes and evasions as he could devise'; John Heywood, *The Spider and Flie*, 1556 (Spenser Society ed., p. 74) 'Thou hast found this feate [i.e., fit] stertyng hole, To hyde thy head in'; Marlowe, *Edward II* (ed. Dyce, II, 231):

Advance your standard, Edward, in the field,
And march to fire them from their starting-holes;

Greene, *The Second Part of Conny-catching*, 1592 (ed. Harrison, p. 15): 'There is no act, statute, nor law so strickt conueid [i.e., managed], but there be straight found starting holes to auoid it.'

296. **my masters.** See 11, 2, 80, note.

298-307. **The lion . . . prince.** As King of Beasts the lion was thought to respect royal blood. For many examples from mediæval romances see Kolbing, *Englische Studien*, XVI (1892), 454 ff.—**for a true prince.** Falstaff mischievously intimates that he is glad to have this confirmation of the Prince's legitimacy — **Watch . . . to-morrow.** A jocosely profane application of the text (*Matthew*, xxvi, 41) — **boys.** Cf. l. 11.

310. **the argument:** the subject; the plot of the play.

318. **Marry.** See i, 2, 26, note.

321. **a royal man.** A noble was a third of a pound sterling; a royal was half a pound.

329. **By'r Lady.** Cf. l. 50.

337. **swear . . . England:** swear so many false oaths that Truth would flee the country in horror.

341. **beslobber:** daub. Here Shakespeare took a hint from *The Famous Victories*, where Derrick explains how he avoided active service in the war with France: 'Euery day when I went into the field, I would take a straw and thrust it into my nose, And make my nose bleed, and then I wold go into the field, And when the Captaine saw me, he would say, Peace a bloodie souldier, and bid me stand aside' (sig. F3, lf. 2 v^o).

343. **true:** honest — **that:** what.

344-348. Bardolph has a red nose and an inflamed countenance. See Fluellen's description of him in *Henry V*, iii, 6, 108 ff.: 'His face is all bubukles and whelks, and knobs, and flames o' fire, and his lips blows at his nose, and it is like a coal of fire, sometimes plue and sometimes red' — **with the manner:** in the act,—literally, with the stolen property in your possession. Cf. Mabbe, *The Rogue* (ed *Tudor Translations*, III, 217): 'He is taken in the manner, the theft found about him, hee cannot possibly denie it'

351, 352. **meteors . . . exhalations.** Synonymous. See i, 1, 10, note. Bardolph points at his own face with a swaggering air.

354. **portend:** threaten. Meteors were regarded as portentous phenomena. Cf. v, 1, 19-21.

355. **Hot livers and cold purses:** They indicate that you have heated your liver by drinking and emptied your purse in paying for your liquor. Cf. Nashe, *The Unfortunate Traveller*, 1594 (ed. McKerrow, II, 247): 'hot livered drunkards.'—**cold purses.** It is money that keeps one's purse warm. Cf. *Winter's Tale*, IV, 3, 127, 128. 'Your purse is not hot enough to purchase your spice'; *Timon*, III, 4, 14: "'Tis deepest winter in Lord Timon's purse.'

356. **Choler, . . . if rightly taken:** A choleric (bilious) temperament, if properly interpreted. Bardolph's explanation of his red face involves a warning. *Choler* meant 'bile'; too much bile caused eruptions, a bilious habit of body was accompanied by a *choleric* ('quick-tempered') disposition. See l. 267, note.

357. **No . . . halter.** Prince Hal's pun is a masterpiece. In a speech only five words long he puns on three words. *Rightly, taken*, and *halter* are all three emphasized in a voice that rises in pitch: 'No, if *rightly* (justly, as you ought to be) **TAKEN** (arrested)—**HALTER** (collar; the hangman's noose)!'

360. **creature of bombast:** stuffed creature. *Bombast* was cotton or wool used as padding.

363–365. **talent:** talon—**thumb-ring:** a seal ring worn (as the fashion was) on the thumb.—**blows . . . bladder.** Cf. Greene, *Mamillia*, Part II, 1593 (ed. Grosart, II, 243): 'blowne vp with sighes.'

371–373. Glendower was thought to be a magician. See III, 1, 53–57.—**Amamon:** the name of a fiend. Cf. *Merry Wives*, II, 2, 310—**cuckold.** J. Q. Adams is undoubtedly right in suggesting that Falstaff alludes to Lucifer's horns. No Elizabethan could let slip a chance to mention the horns that were said to grow on the forehead of the husband of an unfaithful wife.—

a Welsh hook: a kind of pike with a hook just below the point.

383. **metal:** material, stuff.—**run.** The pun is clear enough. Good hard metal does not *melt* easily.

387. **ye cuckoo!** Because you repeat my words without regard to their sense.

393. **bluecaps:** Scots (who wore 'blue bonnets').

395. **cheap.** Because the people fear that a revolution will result in confiscation of landed property and are eager to turn their estates into money.

416, 417. **This chair . . . crown.** Cf. Greene, *Orlando Furioso* (Malone Society ed., ll. 257 ff.):

- For when I come and set me downe to rest,
My chaire presents a throne of Maiestie:
And when I set my bonnet on my head,
Me thinkes I fit my forehead for a Crowne:
And when I take my truncheon in my fist,
A Scepter then comes tumbling in my thoughts.

—**my state:** my chair of state.—**this cushion.** Falstaff puts the cushion on his head.

418–420. The Prince speaks with exaggerated solemnity, as if he were a prophet. Cf. *Isaiah*, xxii, 19. 'And I will drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down' *Taken for* means 'understood to be,' 'seen to be,' and also 'taken away in exchange for.'—**join'd stool:** an ordinary wooden stool put together by a joiner (a maker of furniture).

426. **passion:** strong emotion.—**King Cambyzes' vein:** i.e., style. Thomas Preston's ridiculous tragedy *Cambyzes, King of Persia* was printed about 1570. Shakespeare doubtless had it in mind, though Preston's idea of an emotional style is very different from Falstaff's. Compare the dying speech of King Cambyzes (ed. Manly, II, 207, 208):

- Out! alas! what shal I doo? my life is finishèd!
Wounded I am by sodain chaunce, my blood is minishèd
Gogs hart, what meanes might I make, my life to preserve?
Is there nought to be my helpe? nor is there nought to serve?
Out upon the court and lords that there remaine!
To help my greefe in this my case wil none of them take paine?

427. **my leg:** an elaborate bow—one leg being drawn back and the other knee bent

434. **convey:** escort her hence.—**tristful:** sorrowful.

436. **these harlotry players:** these rascals of players. The Hostess uses the word lightly—not in condemnation. Com-

pare the use of *rogue*, *rascal*, etc., as pet names for children

438. **Peace.** Falstaff is forced to drop his play-acting for a moment, since his histrionic speeches in ll. 431 and 434 have served only to prompt Dame Quickly to admiring interruption. He calls the Hostess by names suggested by her occupation—*tickle-brain*. A cant word for strong drink. Steevens compares *A New Trick to Cheat the Devil*, 1636 'A cup of Nipsitate brisk and neat, The Drawers call it tickle-brain.'

440 **the camomile.** Falstaff is imitating the style of Lyly's *Euphues*. We are not to infer, however (as some critics do) that Shakespeare means to ridicule or satirize Lyly. Parody is not necessarily ridicule, and Shakespeare often shows the influence of *Euphues* in serious passages. For the camomile figure see *Euphues*, ed. Bond, I, 196: 'Though the Camomill, the more it is trodden and pressed downe, the more it spreadeth, yet the violet the oftner it is handled and touched, the sooner it withereth and decayeth.' Steevens compares Marston, *Parasitaster*, ii, 1, 231, 232 (ed. Bullen, II, 144): 'a repressed fame [i.e., rumour] mounts like the camomile—the more trod on, the more it grows.'

447 **micher:** a truant, a boy who, instead of going to school, sneaks off into a blackberry patch. *Mich* (pronounced *meech*) is still a dialect word for to 'skulk' or 'sneak.' Steevens cites Lyly, *Mother Bombe*, i, 3, 190, 191 (ed. Bond, III, 182): 'How like a micher he standes, as though he had treuanted from honestie!' *Micher* often means 'vagabond.'—**blackberries.** Cf. Copland, *The Hye Way to the Spyttel Hous* [i.e., *Hospital*], ca. 1536, ll. 139 ff. (ed. Hazlitt, *Early Popular Poetry*, IV, 29):

As losels, myghty beggers and vacabonds,
And trewands that walke ouer the londs,
Mychers, hedge-crepers, fylloks, and luskas,¹
That all the somer kepe dyches and buskes,
Lowtryng, and wandryng fro place to place,
And wyll not worke but the bypaths trace,
And lvue with haws,² and hunt the blackberry.

¹A string of synonyms

²Hawthorn berries

456 **pitch . . . defile.** 'He that toucheth pitch shall be defiled' (*Ecclesiasticus*, xiii, 1).

459 **passion:** bitter grief Cf. l 426.

463. **goodly:** handsome.—**portly:** stately; of imposing appearance. Cf. 1, 3, 13—**corpulent:** full-bodied—not in the modern sense of 'extremely stout.'

467 **lewdly given:** inclined to low conduct. *Lewd* was a general term for 'base,' 'disreputable.'

468, 469 **the tree . . . by the fruit.** 'The tree is known by his fruit' (*Matthew*, xii, 33)—**peremptorily:** positively; without fear of contradiction.

471. **naughty varlet:** bad boy. Falstaff suddenly drops the elaborate preaching style and speaks like an ordinary father scolding a youngster who has misbehaved

472 **Dost thou speak like a king?** Prince Hal refers especially to Falstaff's last sentence.

481. **a rabbit-sucker:** a sucking rabbit (not yet weaned) Cf. 'She must have rabbit suckers Without spot or specke' (*Roxburghe Ballads*, ed. Chappell, II, 35).—**a poulter's hare:** i e, one hung up (for sale) at the door of a poulterer's (poultry dealer's) shop. Cowl quotes Beaumont and Fletcher, *Philaster*, v, 4 (ed. Dyce, I, 297): 'I could . . . hang you up cross-legg'd, Like a hare at a poulter's.'

487-489. **'Sblood.** A tremendous oath, spoken with swaggering emphasis. See 1, 2, 82, note.—**I'll tickle ye for a young prince:** I'll play the young prince in a style that shall make you jump! Cf. Middleton and Rowley, *The Spanish Gypsy*, iv, 3, 57 (ed. Bullen, VI, 201): 'I'll tickle you for a rakehell [i e., a roisterer]'

490, 491. **ungracious:** graceless —**grace:** virtue.

493-495. **converse:** associate—**humours:** morbid secretions in the body, practically equivalent to 'diseases' Cf. *2 Henry IV*, i, 2, 273, where Falstaff complains of the gout.—**bolting hutch:** huge receptacle—literally, a bin into which flour falls when it is sifted. Sir Hugh Plat gives a picture and a description of an improved 'bolting Hutch' in *The Jewel House of Art and*

Nature, 1653, p. 213—**bombard**: a leather wine vessel Cf. *Tempest*, II, 2, 20, 21 'Yond same black cloud, yond huge one, looks like a foul bombard that would shed his liquor'

496-503. **Manningtree ox**. Manningtree in Essex appears to have been celebrated for fat cattle and barbecues as well as for morality plays acted by local talent Malone quotes Dekker, *The Seven Deadly Sinnes of London*, 1606 (ed. Grosart, II, 73). 'Crueltie hath yet another part to play, it is acted (like the old Morralls at *Maningtree*) by Trades-men'; and Nashe, *The Chouse of Valentines* (ed. McKerrow, III, 404):

And goe to some village abbordering neere
To taste the creame, and cakes and such good cheere,
Or see a playe of strange moralitie
Shewen by Bachelrie of Maningtree,
Whereto the Countrie franklins flock-meale swarm

—**pudding**: sausage —**vice**: the comic character in the old morality plays—impersonating Iniquity in general or some particular sin. Cf. *Richard III*, III, 1, 82: 'the formal vice, Iniquity.' —**that vanity in years**: that aged impersonation of folly and worldliness. Vanity is a character in the old play *Liberality and Prodigality*.—**cunning**: skilful.

506. **your Grace**: your Majesty. Not, in Shakespeare's time, limited to the title of a duke —**take me with you**: 'Go no faster than I can follow you Let me know your meaning' (Johnson).

514, 515. **saving your reverence**. An apologetic phrase (*salva reverentia*), 'respect for you being preserved,' i.e., 'spoken with no intention of offending you' It was used (often by persons of inferior rank) in mentioning something indecent or unpleasant. See *Romeo and Juliet*, I, 4, 42, and note.

521. **Pharaoh's lean kine**. See *Genesis*, xli, 18-21.

528. **I do, I will**: I will never banish him until I banish all the world. That he is to 'banish plump Jack' in *2 Henry IV* (v, 5) is, naturally, not in the Prince's mind, for when that happens, he has 'turn'd away his former self.'

531. **Out**: Come, come! A protesting interjection. See II, 2, 45, note.

534. **the devil rides upon a fiddlestick!** The Prince refers to the hostess's excitement: 'You have something marvellous to report! What's all this hubbub about?' Steevens compares Fletcher, *The Humorous Lieutenant*, iv, 4 (ed Dyce, VI, 512):

I must go see him presently,
For this is such a jig! for certain, gentlemen,
The fiend rides on a fiddlestick

The association of the devil with dancing and dance music is a venerable notion, not to be ascribed (as has been thoughtlessly suggested) to a Puritan origin. Étienne de Bourbon, a Preaching Friar of the thirteenth century, declares that the devil is the inventor and patron of dances. 'I have heard,' he adds, 'that a certain holy man once saw a devil, in the shape of a little Ethiop, standing over the head of a woman who was leading a dance. He was dancing and directing her movements.'¹ Jacques de Vitry, a famous crusading preacher and bishop of the same century, declares that a dance in a ring is 'a circle of which the devil is the centre.'²

540, 541. **Never call . . . a counterfeit.** One cannot be absolutely certain what Falstaff means. Either of two interpretations makes good sense: (1) 'Believe what the hostess is telling you'; (2) 'Take me for what I am—genuine gold, and no sham.' The former fits the situation and the context better.

543, 544. **I deny your major.** A stock phrase in a formal argument: 'I deny your major premise.' *Major* was almost or quite identical in pronunciation with *mayor*. Hence Falstaff's pun—**deny the sheriff**: refuse to admit him—**so**: well and good—a **cart**: in which criminals are carried to the gallows.

547, 548. **the arras.** The tapestry hangings were supported on frames at some distance from the walls—**true**: honest.

¹'Audiui cuidam viro sancto apparuisse diabolum in specie parvuli Ethiopi, stantem super quamdam que ducebat choreas, et circumducentem eam ut volebat, et springantem super caput ejus.' (*Anecdotes Historiques*, ed. Lecoy de La Marche, p. 397, cf. pp. 225, 226).

²Note to the same, p. 226; cf. *Alteutsche Blätter*, ed. Haupt and Hoffmann, 1836, I, 52.

556 **A hue and cry:** a general muster of citizens in pursuit of a criminal.

561. **not here.** Prince Hal makes what used to be called a 'mental reservation':—'not *here*, but behind the arras.' Thus he equivocates, avoiding a direct lie. A gesture, no doubt, served to emphasize *here*.

563 **engage:** pledge. Cf. i, 1, 21.

566 **withal:** with. Often so used at the end of a clause

573. **morrow:** morning

574. **be.** For the subjunctive in indirect discourse see ii, 1, 37, and note.

575. **Paul's:** Saint Paul's Church in London.

577. **Fast asleep.** Falstaff relies upon the Prince to see him safely through this affair; but even so, his calmness is proof enough that he is no coward.

588-596. **ob.** An abbreviation for *obolus* (a small Greek coin)—'halfpenny.' So *d.* (*denarius*) is used for 'penny' and £ (*libra*) for 'pound.'—**close:** secret.—**at more advantage:** when we have a better opportunity.—**a charge of foot:** a company of infantry.—**twelve score:** i.e., yards. The Prince adopts the method of measuring used in archery. The English war arrow was a cloth-yard in length.—**with advantage:** with addition.—**betimes:** in good season; early.

ACT III. Scene I.

At Bangor, in Wales, at the house of the Archdeacon of Bangor.

2. **induction.** An *induction* is an introductory scene which precedes the first act of a play. See *The Taming of the Shrew*.—**prosperous hope:** hope of prospering.

13-15. **nativity:** birth—**front:** literally, forehead (Latin *frons*).—**cressets:** a kind of torch, consisting of a small metal fire-basket filled with combustibles and attached to the end of a pole so as to swing on a pivot.

27-33. Hotspur expounds, in figurative language, the scientific theory which had come down from classical times and which was currently accepted in Shakespeare's day. In 1580 there was an earthquake which frightened the audiences in the London theatres (see the Introduction to *Romeo and Juliet*). See Gabriel Harvey, *Letters*, 1580 (ed. Grosart, I, 52): 'The Matière Cause of Earthquakes (as . . . is sufficiently prooued by Aristotle in y^e second Booke of his *Meteors*¹) is no doubt great aboundance of wynde, or stoare of grosse and drye vapours, and spirites, fast shut vp, & as a man would saye, emprysoned in the Caues, and Dungeons of the Earth: which winde or vapors, seeking to be set at libertie, and to get them home to their Natural lodgings, in a great fume, violently rush out, and as it were breake prison, which forcible Eruption, and strong breath, causeth an Earthquake.'—Cf. Marlowe, *1 Tamburlaine*, 1, 2 (ed. Dyce, I, 21); Chapman, *Bussy D'Ambois* (Pearson ed., II, 29).

29. colic. Cf. Fletcher, *The Elder Brother*, iii, 3, 2-4:

In every corner,
As if the earth were shaken by some strange colic,
There are stirs and motions

31-35. enlargement: release.—beldame: old lady.—Our grandam earth. Cf. the additions to Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* (ed. Boas, p. 65): 'Stampe our grandam earth'; Dekker, *The Ravens Almanacke*, 1609 (ed. Grosart, IV, 205): 'Our aged Grandam (the earth)'.—distemp'rature: disorder, ailment Cf. v, 1, 3.—passion: suffering.—of: from.

44-49. clipp'd in with: enclosed by; within the limits of—read to me: given me instruction.—trace: follow.—art: art magic.—hold me pace: keep up with me—deep: occult.

50 Welsh. Hotspur suggests that ability to speak Welsh is a magical accomplishment.

53 the vasty deep: the illimitable (abysmal) depths, the world of demons. Cf. 2 *Henry IV*, ii, 4, 170, 171.

¹*Meteorologica*, ii. 8 (ed. Ideler, I, 110 ff.).

58. **coz:** cousin. See 1, 1, 31

59. **Tell truth and shame the devil.** An old proverb. Truth shames the devil because he is 'the father of lies.' Cf. Latimer, *Sermons* (Parker Society ed., p. 506). 'When the devil moveth me to make lies, I must confound him with God's word. St. Paul saith, . . . "Speak the truth every one to his neighbour": as there is a common saying amongst us, "Say the truth and shame the devil": so every one, man and woman, must fight against the devil'; Jonson, *A Tale of a Tub*, II, 2, 138, 139 (ed. Herford and Simpson, III, 31). 'Harke you Iohn Clay, if you have Done any such thing, tell troth and shame the Divell' See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, p. 649

64 ff. Cf. Holinshed: 'The king . . . went with a great power of men into Wales, to pursue the capteine of the Welsh rebels, Owen Glendouer, but in effect he lost his labor, for Owen conueied himselfe out of the waie into his knowen lurking places, and (as was thought) through art magike, he caused such foule weather of winds, tempest, raine, snow, and haile to be raised, . . . that the like had not beene heard of: in such sort, that the king was constrained to returne home'

64, 65. **made head:** mustered an army. *Head* for 'an armed force' is common. See 1, 3, 284, note.—**power:** troops. See 1, 1, 22, note.

67. **Bootless:** unsuccessful—literally, without advantage. The vowel of the first syllable is prolonged with a change of pitch and thus *boot-* becomes dissyllabic. Cf. l. 156.—**weather-beaten:** i e., by storms raised by my magic.

68. **boots.** Cf. II, 1, 90-93

70, 71 **our right:** the territory that rightfully belongs to us.—**our threefold order ta'en:** the arrangement we have made for a division into three parts.

72, 73. **Archdeacon.** *Arch-* is dissyllabic.—**limits:** well-defined districts.

74. **hitherto:** up to this line. He points at the map.

80-82. **indentures tripartite:** contracts to which all three of us are parties.—**drawn:** drawn up.—**may:** can.

87. **father:** father-in-law. Cf. l. 147.

89. **may have:** will be able to have.

92. **in my conduct:** escorted by me. Cf. l. 197.

96 **moiety:** share. The word was not confined, as in modern English, to 'half.'

98-103. For this dative see ii, 4, 114, note.—**cranking:** winding; with a turn in its course.—**cantle:** section, segment.—**smug:** smooth. Often used in the sense of 'trimly dressed,' 'spruce.' Hotspur is playing with the word.—**fair and evenly:** in a direct course. One *-ly* serves for two adverbs. Cf. *Julius Caesar*, ii, 1, 224. 'fresh and merrily.'

105 **bottom:** a tract of low alluvial land.

110 **Gelding . . . as much:** cutting out as large a piece from the opposite bank. A *continent* is, literally, a 'container,' 'that which holds something in.'

112 **charge:** expense.

122 **in the English court.** Holinshed records that Glendower, in his youth, was 'set to studie the lawes of the realme, and became an vtter barrester, or an apprentise of the law, . . . and serued king Richard at Flint castell.'

123-125. **I framed to the harp . . . ditty:** I composed many songs in English for tunes played on the harp. *Ditty* (from Old French *dité, ditié*) is the regular term for the 'words' of a song. Cf. *Soliman and Perseda*, i, 2, 12, 13 (Kyd, ed. Boas, p. 165) 'When didst thou sing a note that I could heare, But I haue framde a dittie to the tune?'—a **helpful ornament.** Glendower means that his songs not only adorned the English language but also helped to develop it for elegant literary use.

126. a **virtue:** an accomplishment.

130. **ballet-mongers:** dealers in ballads, poetasters, rhymers. Used for 'poets' in humorous contempt. See ii, 2, 47, note. Cf. *Winter's Tale*, iv, 4, 181 ff.

131 **canstick:** candlestick —**turn'd:** i.e., on a lathe. Steevens quotes *A New Trick to Cheat the Devil*, 1636:

As if you were to lodge in Lothbury,
Where they turn brazen candlesticks

134. **mincing**: walking with short and carefully measured steps. Cf. *Hamlet*, III, 1, 150

135. **the forc'd gait of a shuffling nag**: the mincing steps of a tricky horse whose legs have been confined in order to force him to take a regular gait. For *shuffling* in the sense of 'trickery' see *Hamlet*, III, 3, 61.

137. **give**. Emphatic.

143, 144. **withal**: also, likewise — **Break with**: broach the subject to; inform.—**of**: concerning.

147. **cross**: vex (by contradiction, etc.).

148. **I cannot choose**: I cannot help it. Cf. I, 3, 279, note.

149–153 Holinshed writes that the division just discussed was made '(as some haue said) through a foolish credit given to a vaine prophesie, as though king Henrie was *the mold-warpe*, cursed of Gods owne mouth, and they three were the *dragon*, the *lion*, and the *woolfe*, which should diuide this realme betweene them' For the prophecy see *Archæologia*, XX (1824), 258, 259; cf. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century*, 1913, p. 236.

149. **moldwarp**: mole—so called because it *warps* (throws up) the mold (the soil).

150–152. **Merlin**. The famous prophet of the Arthurian legend Cf. *King Lear*, III, 2, 80–96.—**a moulten raven**: a raven that had moulted—cast off most of its feathers.

153–155. **couching** . . . **ramping**: couchant ('lying down,' 'crouching'), rampant ('standing on its hind legs and pawing the air')—heraldic terms.—**skimble-skamble stuff**: nonsensical rigmarole.—**puts me from my faith**: makes me so incredulous that I can no longer believe even my creed as a Christian.

156. **nine**. A dissyllable, the *i* being prolonged with a change of pitch. Cf. I. 67, note

158. **go to!** literally, 'go away!' used like our 'go way' (which is an old idiom) to express surprise or incredulity or as mere interjection of protest. Hotspur means, not that he scoffed at Glendower's story, but that he paid only so much attention as enabled him to pretend polite astonishment

160, 161. **a railing wife . . . a smoky house.** Cf. *The Payne and Sorowe of Evelyll Maryage*, ll. 96-98 (ed. Hazlitt, *Early Popular Poetry*, IV, 78):

Salomon sayth there be thynges thre,
Shrewde [i.e. shrewish] wyues, rayne, and smokes blake,
Make husbandes ofte theyr houses to forsake.

See *Proverbs*, x, 26; xxi, 19; xxvii, 15, Apperson, *English Proverbs*, pp. 629, 630.

163, 164. **cates:** delicate viands.—**summer house:** a rich man's 'summer residence.'

165. **worthy:** honourable.

166, 167. **profited . . . concealments:** proficient in wonderful secrets (of magic).

170-172. **He holds . . . respect:** he is very considerate of your hasty temperament.—**scope:** freedom of speech—**come 'cross his humour:** say something that tends to put him out of humour.—**Faith:** in faith; upon my word.

174, 175. **Might:** could.—**tempted:** provoked.—**Without the taste . . . reproof:** without having experienced some rebuke that would have been dangerous to you.

176 **use it:** practise it.

177-179. **too wilful-blame:** too blameworthy for your wilfulness—for insisting on having your own way.—**besides his patience:** beyond the bounds of self-control.

181-189. **blood:** high spirit.—**the dearest grace . . . you:** the most notable honour it does you.—**present:** show.—**government:** self-control.—**opinion:** self-opinion, self-conceit.—**of which:** of which faults.—**Loseth:** causes the loss of; makes him lose.—**parts:** good qualities.—**Beguling them of commendation:** causing them to lose (cheating them out of) the praise that they deserve.

190 **I am school'd:** I have had my lesson.—**be your speed:** give you good fortune; cause you to prosper.

192. **spite:** vexation; vexatious circumstance.

196, 197. **aunt.** Lady Percy was Sir Edmund Mortimer's sis-

ter. She was aunt to Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March.—in your conduct: under your escort Cf. l. 92.

198. Glendower explains what the lady has said. She has insisted on accompanying her husband.—**desperate here**: a hopeless case—beyond the possibility of persuasion on *this* point.—**peevish**: childish.—**harlotry**: jade. Used, like *wench*, as a fancifully affectionate word Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, iv, 2, 14: 'A peevish self-will'd harlotry it is.' *Rogue, rascal, wretch, fool*, etc., are similarly used.

200–204. **That pretty Welsh**: your tears.—**down**. Dissyllabic.—**perfect in**: well versed in.—**In such a parley**: in the same kind of discourse.

205. **a feeling disputation**: a heartfelt discussion—exchange of sentiments.

208. **ditties**. See l. 124, note.

210. **division**: modulation, harmony. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, iii, 5, 29: 'Some say the lark makes sweet division.'

213. **the wanton rushes**: the rushes which covered the floor of the house (and the stage) instead of a carpet or rug. *Wanton* means, literally, 'unrestrained' and is used in a great variety of special senses. Here it suggests comfort and luxurious ease: 'this soft carpet of plentiful rushes.'

216. **crown the god of sleep**: give sleep its sway.

217–221. **heaviness**: drowsiness.—**such difference . . . East**: 'a state partaking of sleep and wakefulness, as the twilight of night and day' (Johnson).

223. **our book**: the 'indentures' mentioned in ll. 80, 141.—**drawn**: finished in a fair copy and ready to be sealed. See l. 143.

224–226. **those musicians . . . here**. Glendower promises to summon spirits of the air to play the music Cf. *Tempest*, i, 2, 375 ff.; ii, i, 296 ff., iii, 3, 18, 19.

232, 233. 'tis no marvel, he is so humorous: after all, it is no wonder that the devil understands Welsh: he is so whimsical a fellow that he might naturally take a fancy to learn such a strange language.—**By'r Lady**. See ii, 4, 50, note.

236. **humours**: whims, notions

239. **brach:** a bitch hound. Cf. *King Lear*, i, 4, 125: 'Lady the brach.'—in **Irish**. We may infer that Hotspur's hound was of Irish breed; or perhaps he is thinking of wolves, which were not extinct in Ireland until long after Shakespeare's time. Cf. *As You Like It*, v, 2, 118, 119 (and note): 'Tis like the howling of Irish wolves against the moon.'

240. **head broken.** See ii, 1, 34, note. Lady Percy makes a threatening gesture with her fan.

243. **Neither! . . . fault:** No, I won't be still either! To hold one's tongue is a *woman's* fault, and I am a man. Hotspur jestingly reverses a time-honoured proposition. He had often been accused of being as talkative as a woman. See i, 3, 236-238:

Why, what a wasp-stung and impatient fool
Art thou to break into this woman's mood,
Tying thine ear to no tongue but thine own!

244. **God help thee!** for I give thee up.

249. **sooth:** truth.

250. **Heart!** A clipped form of the oath 'by God's heart.'

251. **comfit-maker's:** confectioner's.

253. **mend:** amend. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, i, 5, 81: 'God shall mend my soul!'

254. **sarcenet:** slight, trivial. *Sarcenet* is a kind of thin silk, used especially for linings. It does not give much strength to the garment it lines.

255. **As if . . . Finsbury:** as if you were the wife of a citizen of London. Finsbury was in Shakespeare's day a recreation ground outside of the city—a favourite resort for Londoners on Sundays and holidays. Cf. Greene, *The Thirde Part of Conny-catching*, 1592 (ed. Harrison, p. 13) 'Vpon a Sonday in the afternone, when it was her turne to attend on her maister and mistres to the garden in Finsbury fields, to regard the children while they sported about.'

256-259. **me.** Ethical dative. See ii, 4, 114, note.—**protést:** affirmation—not strong enough to be called an oath.—**of pepper gingerbread:** of no more firmness or solidity than a crumbly

substance like gingerbread—guards: trimmings, such as adorned citizens' best attire.

262. 'Tis the next way: Well, if you won't sing, don't! Perhaps you're right in refusing. After all, singing is the nearest way to becoming a tailor or a bird-teacher—and nobody wishes you to take up either of those trades. Theobald compares Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, II, 8 (ed. Dyce, II, 171): 'Never trust a tailor that does not sing at his work.'

268. By this: by this time. See I. 223.

Scene II.

1. give us leave: allow us to be alone. A regular form of polite dismissal

5. some displeasing service . . . done: some lapse from duty in serving him.

6, 7. doom: judgment, decree.—out . . . for me: he means to bring vengeance and punishment upon me that shall be the direct outcome of my own son's acts.

8. thy passages of life: the actions of thy life.

11. my. Emphatic.—mistreadings: false steps; transgressions. —else: if that were not the case.

12. inordinate: irregular (not suitable to thy order, thy 'rank')—not, excessive.

13. lewd: vulgar, low.—attempts: undertakings, exploits.

15-17. withal: with.—grafted to: as a graft becomes an integral part of the tree to which it is grafted.—hold their level with: satisfy.

19-21. Quit: acquit myself of; prove my innocence of—all . . . many. Both emphatic.—doubtless: certain, confident.—purge. Synonymous with *quit*.

22, 23. such extenuation: such a degree of moderation in the judgment passed upon me.—in reproof of: when I shall disprove.—tales devis'd: made-up stories, fictitious tales.

24, 25. **Which . . . newsmongers:** which great persons must of necessity often hear by the report of smiling parasites and base talebearers.—**pickthanks.** To *pick a thank* is an idiom for to 'speak or act merely for the sake of winning one's favour.' The noun is common in the sense of 'flatterer' or 'parasite,' especially one who pretends to give secret information. See the character of 'Mr Pickthank' in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Holinshed tells us that the Prince 'got knowledge that certeine of his fathers seruants were busie to giue informations against him . . . : they put into the kings head, not onlie what euill rule [i.e., conduct] (according to the course of youth) the prince kept . . . , but also what great resort of people came to his house. . . . These tales brought no small suspicion into the kings head, least his sonne would presume to vsurpe the crowne.' Holinshed styles these informers 'pickthanks.'

28. **on my true submission:** when I submit myself in all sincerity to your judgment.

29. **God pardon thee!** I pardon thee, and I pray that God will pardon thee also.

30, 31. **affections:** inclinations.—**hold a wing.** A figure from falconry.—**from.** The emphatic *from*: 'away from,' 'contrary to.'

32. **rudely lost:** lost by thy rude conduct. According to Holinshed the Prince 'had with his fist striken the cheefe iustice for sending one of his minions . . . to prison.' 'The king after expelled him out of his priuie counsell, banisht him the court, and made the duke of Clarence (his yoonger brother) president of counsell in his steed.' In *The Famous Victories* the scene with the Chief Justice is presented in full vigour. We even have the stage direction 'He giueth him a boxe on the eare.' Shakespeare deals with this story in *2 Henry IV*, v, 2.

36. **time:** thy time of life; thy youth.

38. **do.** The form of the verb is determined by the general sense of plurality in the preceding phrase.

40. **So common-hackney'd . . . men:** made such an ordinary sight for everybody's eyes. A *hackney* is a horse kept for hire

42, 43. **Opinion:** public opinion.—**Had:** would have.—**possession:** the possessor—King Richard. Abstract nouns are often used to designate persons Cf. 'Bring in the admiration,' i.e., 'this wonderful person' (*All's Well*, II, 1, 91). See *Romeo and Juliet*, III, 5, 237, and note.

44. **banishment.** See *Richard II*, I, 3, 139 ff.

45. **likelihood:** promise.

46 ff. King Henry is so earnest in his desire for his son's reformation that he exposes his own politic course of action in bringing about the deposition of Richard II. Cf. *Richard II*, I, 4, 23 ff., where King Richard describes Henry's 'courtship to the common people.'

50. **I stole all courtesy from heaven:** I assumed in my bearing a courtesy like that of heaven. The King is thinking of the doctrine that all men are of equal rank in God's sight—that 'God is no respecter of persons' (*Acts*, x, 34). *Stole* expresses the hypocrisy of his conduct.

51. **dress'd myself.** Figures from clothing abound in Shakespeare. Cf. 'attir'd in wonder' (*Much Ado*, IV, 1, 146); 'with purpose to be dress'd in an opinion of wisdom' (*Merchant of Venice*, I, 1, 91, 92); 'So shall I clothe me in a forc'd content' (*Othello*, III, 4, 120). It is surprising that some ingenious theorist (emulating those who maintain that Shakespeare knew so much law that he must have been Lord Bacon) has not suggested that he was a tailor.

56. **pontifical:** such as is worn on solemn occasions by the Pope or an archbishop.

57-59 **my state:** the splendour that marked the occasions when I appeared in state.—**show'd like a feast:** resembled a great feast day—a solemn festival.—**such solemnity:** i.e., such as attends a festival. *Such* is emphatic.

60, 61. **up and down:** everywhere; hither and yon—always in public sight.—**rash bavin wits:** flashy. Explained by what follows: 'soon kindled and soon burnt.' *Rash* means 'quick.' A *bavin* is a fagot of brushwood used for kindling. Cf. Dekker, *Jests* (ed. Grosart, II, 273): 'A iest is the bubling vp of wit. It is a

Bauin which being well kindled maintaines for a short time the heate of laughter'; *Eastward Hoe*, 1 (Collier's Dodsley, IV, 192): 'If he outlast not a hundred such crackling bavins as thou art.' See Tilley, *Elizabethan Proverb Lore*, p. 69.

62 **carded his state**: debased his royal dignity by associating with such fellows. To *card* is to 'adulterate.' The figure seems to come from mixing coarse wool with fine in the process of carding (combing out with the instrument called a 'card').

64 **with their scorns**: by their scoffs and taunts

65. **countenance**: authority Cf. 1, 2, 31.—**name**: reputation.

66, 67. **gibing**: making satirical jests.—**stand the push . . . comparative**: meet, on equal terms, the onset of every empty-headed youngster who displays his wit in making satirical comparisons See 1, 2, 90, note.

69. **Enfeoff'd himself to popularity**: gave himself to the common people as their absolute possession.

70. **That**: so that.

75. **in June**: when cuckoos abound. Halliwell compares Dekker, *The Guls Horn-booke*, 1609 (ed. Grosart, II, 201): 'I sing (like the cuckooe in June) to be laught at.'

77. **with community**: by the commonness of the sight.

78. **extraordinary**. Every syllable is pronounced.

82. **such aspect**: such a look

83. **cloudy**: sullen, frowning.

84. **glutted**. Craig compares North's Plutarch, ed. 1595, p. 170: 'Pericles nowe to preuent that the people should not be glutted with seeing him too oft . . . neither came much abroade among them, but reserued him self . . . for matters of great importance.'

85 **line**. Cf. 1, 3, 168

87. **with vile participation**: by associating (prince though thou art) with worthless companions

93. **For all the world**: in every respect.

98. **more worthy interest to the state**: a more valid claim to the kingdom. Cf. *King Lear*, i, 1, 85-87; Kyd, *Cornelia*, i (ed. Boas, p. 108): 'What interest had they to Afferique?'

99. **thou . . . succession:** *thou*, who art but the shadow of my successor—for thy claim has no substantial background of merit.

100-102. **colour:** pretext—**harness:** men in armour.—**Turns head:** marches with an armed troop.—**the lion's armed jaws:** the King's army.

103. **no more.** Shakespeare takes felicitous liberty with dates. Percy was, in fact, of about the same age as King Henry. Cf. 1, 1, 86-89.

107. **renowned:** renowned.

109, 110. **majority:** preeminence—**capital:** of highest rank.

112. **swathling:** swaddling.

115. **Enlarged:** released, freed. Cf. 'at large.'

116 **To fill . . . up:** in order to make his own power to defy us complete.

119. **York.** Dissyllabic. Cf. 1, 3, 269.

120. **Capitulate:** have come to an agreement.—**up:** in arms.

121. **these news.** *News* is often plural (*res novae*, 'new things').

123. **dearest.** In a double sense—'best beloved' and 'bitterest.' *Dear* is often used to emphasize the meaning of the noun that it limits. Cf. v, 5, 36; 'my dearest foe' (*Hamlet*, 1, 2, 182)

124, 125. **like:** likely.—**vassal:** befitting one of low rank. Cf. *Edward III*, II, 1, 397 (ed. Brooke, *Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p. 78) 'When vassell feare lies trembling at his feete'—**Base inclination:** an inclination for baseness—for all that is contemptible.—**the start of spleen:** mere unreasoning impulse, mere caprice. See II, 3, 81, note.

132. **redeem . . . head:** make Percy pay for all my faults.

136. **favours:** features.

137. **my shame:** my disgrace

146. **my indignities:** my unworthy actions; 'my shames' (l. 144).

147, 148. **factor:** agent.—**engross up:** to buy up *in gross* (i.e., as we say, 'wholesale') so as to control ('corner') the market.

150. **render every glory.** The idea is that one who subdues a

champion succeeds to all the honours that the champion has won. Percy, at the moment of death, subscribes to this doctrine (v, 4, 77-80).

151. **worship:** honour—**time:** lifetime

156. **intemperance:** wild or dissolute behaviour.

157. **cancels all bands:** all bonds. One cannot collect a debt from a dead man: he has 'paid the debt of nature.' Cf. *Tempest*, iii, 2, 140. 'He that dies pays all debts.' See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, p. 140.

159. **parcel:** part.

161. **charge:** a charge of soldiers; a commission.

163. **So hath . . . of:** And, in like manner, the business that I come to report *hath speed*—i.e., requires immediate action.

164. **Lord Mortimer of Scotland:** George Dunbar, the Scottish Earl of March. Shakespeare calls him Mortimer because the Mortimers were Earls of March in England. The *March* was the 'Border'—the region immediately north and south of the boundary line between the two kingdoms.

167. **head:** armed force.

169 **foul play.** The opposite of 'fair play'—not restricted, as in modern usage, to murder. Here it is used for 'rebellion' or 'treason.'

172. **advertisment:** information, news.

175 **Bridgenorth:** in Shropshire, on the Severn, not far from Shrewsbury.

176, 177. **by which account:** by which reckoning—i.e., according to this computation of time.—**Our business valued:** considering the time that our preparation will require. The absolute construction

180. **him:** himself

Scene III.

1, 2. **fallen away:** shrunk.—**this last action:** the robbery (in ii, 2). Falstaff speaks of it as a military encounter. Cf. ii, 4, 27.—**bate:** abate, grow thin.

4, 5. **apple John**: a kind of apple that was not mellow until it had been kept for some time. The skin became loose and shrivelled in storage. Cowl cites Shirley, *The Ball*, II (ed. Gifford and Dyce, III, 22):

Thy man Apple-John, that looks
As he had been a se'nnight in the straw,
A-ripening for the market

—**suddenly**: immediately.—**while . . . liking**: 'while I have some flesh' (Malone). *In good liking* is an old phrase for 'in substantial bodily condition.'—**out of heart**: depressed in mind and body; in a decline.

10, 11. **a brewer's horse**. Brewers' horses were old and worn-out creatures—not fit for riding. Cowl cites Dekker, *If this be not a Good Play, the Devil is in It* (Pearson ed., III, 307). 'as noble-men vse their great horses, when they are past seruice: sell 'em to brewers and make 'em drey-horses'; *The Tryall of Chevalry*, sig. D4 r^o: 'I haue beene stumbling vp and downe all this night, like a Brewers horse, that has ne're a good eye in his head.'

13. **you are so fretful . . . long**: you'll fret yourself to death.

14, 15. **there is it**: That's just what the matter is.—**given**: inclined. Cf. II, 4, 467.

23–26. **in good compass**: within proper limits (of conduct). Bardolph's pun was inevitable. He applies *compass* in the literal sense of 'circumference,' 'girth.' Cf. Shirley, *The Wedding*, I, 1 (ed. Gifford and Dyce, I, 368):

Belfare He is a great man, indeed.

Isaac. Something given to the waist, for he lives within no reasonable compass, I am sure.

29, 30. **our admiral**: our flagship. The admiral's ship took the lead and therefore had a light in the stern.—**the Knight of the Burning Lamp**. A title made up in imitation of the names taken by adventurous knights in the romances of chivalry. They were regularly derived from the device on the shield:

Knight of the Sun, of the Lion; of the Swan, etc. See *Pericles*, 11, 2.

32-34. as good use of it: i.e., as a warning of death and the last judgment. The figure of a skull (or skull and crossbones) served as a *memento mori*, i.e., as a reminder of the inevitability of death. Such an emblem was often engraved on the seal of a ring. Cf. Rowlands, *A Terrible Battell betweene Time and Death*, ca. 1606 (Hunterian Club ed., p. 7):

Death. Some make my picture a most common thing,
As if I were continual in their thought,
A *Deaths* hed seale vpon a great gold ring,
And round about *Memento Mori* wrought.

See 2 *Henry IV*, 11, 4, 253-255: 'Do not speak like a death's-head. Do not bid me remember mine end.'—*Dives*: the 'rich man' in *Luke*, xvi, 19 ff. Cf. iv, 2, 23, 24.

37-39. By this fire . . . angel. *Psalm* civ, 4: 'Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire' Rolfe cites *Exodus*, 111, 2 For the oath cf. *Misogonus*, 111, 1, 240 (ed Bond, *Early Plays from the Italian*, p. 231). 'By this fier that bournez thats gods aungell I sweare a great oth.'—*given over*: i.e., to Satan.—*utter darkness*: outer darkness. Another Biblical allusion. See *Matthew*, xxv, 30: 'And cast ye the unprofitable servant into utter darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' Falstaff often quotes Scripture or uses religious phraseology. But this does not indicate that Shakespeare is satirizing the Puritans of his day. Such quotations and allusions were by no means confined to the Puritans. Everybody knew his Bible. Nothing was commoner, for instance, than for a lawyer to appeal to scriptural authority in an argument in court.

40-54. *ignis fatuus*: fool's fire; will-o'-the-wisp—*wildfire*: a kind of firework used in war. The term was also applied to fiery appearances in the air, which were often thought to be evil spirits.—*there's no purchase in money*: money is not worth stealing. *Purchase* means 'booty.' Cf. ii, 1, 100, 101: 'Thou shalt have a share in our purchase'—*triumph*: illumination,

as at a public festival.—**marks**. A mark was two thirds of a pound—**links**: small torches. There were no street lights. Linkboys were hired if the night was dark—as **good cheap**: as cheap—literally, at as favourable a market (*à bon marché*).—**chandler**: candle-maker.—**salamander**: a fabulous lizard that lived in the element of fire and made fire its food.

56. **'Sblood**. See i, 2, 82, note.—**I would . . . belly**. A proverbial curse on a bore or an impertinent talker. 'I wish that word (or that subject) had been swallowed by you, so that I need hear no more of it.' There is an implication that the morsel would be indigestible. Compare the phrase 'to eat one's words.'

57. **God-a-mercy**: God have mercy—**heart-burn'd**. *Heart-burn* is an old name for a certain symptom of indigestion. It is caused by acid from the stomach. Cf. *Much Ado*, ii, 1, 4.

60. **Dame Partlet**. Pertelote is the name of the hen in Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale*. Cf. *Winter's Tale*, ii, 3, 75. The Hostess's manner is that of a startled and fluttering fowl. Note her agitated entrance at ii, 4, 314.

67. **the tithe**: the tenth part.

69. **Go to**: Away with you! See iii, 1, 158, note.

71. **God's light**. A common oath, often abbreviated to *'Slight*.

79–81. **dowlas**: a kind of coarse linen.—**bolters**: cloths for sifting flour.

82–86. **holland**: fine linen.—**an ell**: a cloth measure of forty-five inches.—**by-drinkings**: drinks between meals.

91. **denier**: the least coin. A *denier* (Latin *denarius*) was a French coin of small value—a **youunker**: an unsophisticated youngster

95. **mark**. See i. 43

100–102. **Jack**: a low fellow; a rascal—a **sneak-cup**: one who 'sneaks drinks'—does not drink glass for glass with his friends.—**truncheon**: short staff.—**Is . . . door?** Is that the way the wind blows?

104. **Newgate fashion**: handcuffed or tied together in pairs,

like prisoners who are led to Newgate prison or from Newgate to the courtroom. Cf. Dekker, *Satiro-mastix* (Pearson ed., I, 221):

Why then, come, we'll walke arme in arme,
As tho we were leading one another to Newgate

112. **arras**. See II, 4, 547, note.

126-131. **a stewed prune**. Stewed prunes were a customary dish in houses of ill fame.—**a drawn fox**: 'a fox drawn from his cover, whose cunning in doubling and deceiving the hounds makes the simile perfectly appropriate' (Singer).—**for**: as for.—**Maid Marian . . . to thee**: Maid Marian may serve as a pattern of womanly propriety in comparison with you. Maid Marian was a character in May games and morris dances, in which she is sometimes paired with Robin Hood; but she is unknown to the oldest Robin Hood tradition.¹ The girl who played Maid Marian was not likely to be a very decorous person. The *deputy of the ward* was an important local official, and his wife would doubtless be a model of propriety. Cf. *Misogonus*, II, 4, 75, 76 (ed. Bond, p. 206). 'This a smurkyng wenche indeede, this a fare Mayde Marion, she is none of thes coy dames.'

134. **on**: for.

136, 137. **setting thy knighthood aside**: if we disregard the fact that you are a knight.

144, 145. **neither fish nor flesh**: neither one thing nor another. See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, pp. 219-220; Tilley, *Elizabethan Proverb Lore*, p. 154. Falstaff refers to Dame Quickly's mental unsteadiness—her inability to stick to the point. For *otter* cf. Shirley, *The Grateful Servant*, II, 1 (ed. Gifford and Dyce, II, 36): 'things which, in fine, turn to otters, appear flesh, but really are fish.'—**where to have her**: how to understand her; how to keep track of her talk.

151, 152. **you**. Emphatic. This is an excellent instance of the Hostess's jumping from one subject to another.—**ought**: owed. The old form of the preterite. It was not in fashionable use.

¹See Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, III, 45, 46.

165. as . . . **man**: insofar as you are merely *man*.

170, 171. **I pray . . . break**. Often used in asseverations. The misfortune invoked as a penalty for falsehood is obvious enough (cf. ii, 4, 238, 239). There is no mysterious meaning involved.

174 **midriff**: diaphragm.

176. **emboss'd**: swollen.

182-184. **injuries**: things the loss of which would be an injury to thee. The Prince uses the word in this unusual sense for the sake of a pun on *wrong*.—**pocket**. To *pocket up wrong* is to 'accept insults or injuries without protest or resentment,' as if they were one's due.

187-189 **in the days of villany**: in the wicked times in which we live.—**more frailty**. Falstaff applies a well-worn proverb that seems to be of Biblical origin (see *Psalms*, xxxix, 4, *Matthew*, xxvi, 41). He appeals to it again in *Merry Wives*, iii, 5, 51, 52: 'Bid her think what a man is. Let her consider his frailty.' Cf. Peele, *Edward I*, sc. viii (ed. Bullen, I, 149): 'O mistress, mistress, flesh is frail'; Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (Pearson ed., I, 34): 'If flesh be fraile, how weak and frail's your vow?' Haughton, *Englishmen for My Money*, iv, 5 (ed. Baugh, p. 197): 'The flesh is frayle, Man hath infirmitie'

195, 196. **Still?** Not yet gone? Still in a temper? The Hostess would like to 'have the last word,' but she is dumbfounded by Falstaff's 'I forgive thee,' which turns the tables completely.—**For**: as for.—**answered**: settled.

206. **with unwash'd hands**: without stopping to wash your hands. A cant phrase for 'without a moment's delay.'

209. **a charge of foot**. See ii, 4, 593, 594.

212. **unprovided**: i.e., with what I need for the campaign.

224. See l. 209.

225. **furniture**: furnishings, equipment.

226. **burning**: on fire with war.

228. **brave**: glorious. See i, 1, 53, note.

229. **I could wish . . . my drum**: I could wish this tavern were the only drum that I must follow—that I could come to

this tavern instead of following the drum to the field of battle. This is not cowardice. It is simply the old soldier's desire for ease and comfort.

ACT IV Scene I.

1. **Well said.** The scene opens near the end of a conversation.
3-5. **attribution:** tribute of praise—**As:** that.—**stamp:** coinage.—**go so general current:** pass current so universally, be accepted as the supreme soldier.

6, 7. **defy . . . of soothers:** solemnly renounce such language as flatterers use.—**braver:** finer, more distinguished.

9. **task me to:** call upon me to verify.—**approve me:** put me to the test.

12. **But:** but that.—**beard him:** meet him face to face in combat.

13. **What letters,** etc Hotspur interrupts himself and then finishes what he had to say to Douglas. Cf. II, 3, 68-77

14. **These letters:** this letter. The plural is often so used (like the Latin *litterae*)

18. **justling:** turbulent.—**his power:** his troops, his army See I, 1, 22, note.

24. **fear'd.** To *fear* means to 'fear for,' to 'worry or be anxious about.' Cf. iv, 2, 64

25-27. **time:** the times—**whole:** sound; in health.—**better worth:** more valuable, of greater consequence

30. **'Tis catching hither:** its contagion reaches here

31. **inward sickness—.** Hotspur breaks off the sentence to consult the letter, of which he gives the substance in what follows.

32-35. **by deputation . . . drawn:** could not be mustered by means of any persons serving as his deputies.—**think . . . his own:** nor did he think it fitting to entrust a business so dangerous and so important to any other person than himself. *Rè-mov'd* means merely 'outside (of one's self)'

36. **bold advertisement**: advice to take the risk.

37. **our small conjunction**: the small army that we have already mustered.—**should on**: should go on; should proceed.

38. **fortune**. Fortune is conceived as a person who may be well or ill disposed toward them

40. **possess'd**: informed.

44, 45. **His present want Seems more**: Our lack of his help seems greater now. *Present* and *seems* are emphatic.

46-48 **To set . . . cast?** To stake (risk) the full amount of the possessions of all of us on one cast of the dice.—**exact**. For the accent see 1, 3, 31, note. Cf. v, 1, 19, 21.—**main**: stake.—**nice**: precarious, delicate.

49-51. **for therein . . . fortunes**: for in so doing—in running such a risk—we should perceive and fully understand that we were exhausting our store of hope—that we had nothing more to hope for—since we were staking to the limit the resources of us all.—**the very soul of hope**: all that keeps hope alive.—**list**: limit. Synonymous with *bound*.

53. **Where**: whereas.—**a sweet reversion**: a comforting expectation—literally, a contingent interest in property that is to revert to one in the future.

56. **A comfort of retirement**: a sustaining reliance on a place of refuge.

58, 59. **big**: threatening; with a menacing air.—**maidenhead**: maidhood, untried youth; outset.

61, 62. **The quality**: the nature—**hair**: synonymous with *quality*. The figure comes from the texture and colour of fur. Cf. *Sir Thomas More*, III, 2, 91 (ed Brooke, *Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p 399): 'A fellow of your haire'; Tournour, *The Transformed Metamorphosis* (ed. Nicoll, p. 53): "'Tis the haire of crime, To shunne the breath that doth discloude it [i.e., its] sinne.'—**Brooks**: permits, allows of.

64. **mere**: out-and-out.

66-68. **apprehension**: idea.—**fearful**: full of fear; timorous.—**breed . . . cause**: make the cause for which we fight seem somewhat questionable.

69-72. **we of the off'ring side . . . arbitrement:** we who are taking the offensive (against established authority) must not allow our actions to be strictly judged.—**loop:** loophole—**from whence . . . upon us:** by means of which our cause can be scrutinized and laid open to discussion.

73-75. **draws:** draws aside—**shows . . . dreamt of:** makes those who do not know the real cause of his absence interpret it as due to some feeling of fear—and that is a weakness that they have never dreamt of ascribing to any of our party.—**strain too far:** exaggerate the danger

76. **this use:** this application, this interpretation.

77. **opinion:** repute; estimation (on the part of the people). Cf. *opinion* for 'public opinion' in iii, 2, 42

80. **make a head:** raise an army. See 1, 3, 284, note

83. **Yet.** Emphatic Cf. 1, 3, 77, 180.—**joints:** limbs

92. **intended:** on the point of setting out

93. **preparation:** an army ready for the field.

95, 96. **nimble-footed.** 'He was passinge swift in runninge, in so much that he with two other of his Lords by force of runninge, without any manner of hounds or grayhounds, or without bowe or other engine, woulde take a wilde bucke or doe at large in a parke' (*Life of Henry V*, ca. 1513, ed. Kingsford, 1911, p. 17)—**madcap.** Here used as an adjective—**comrades.** Note the accent—**daff'd . . . aside:** put away from them; carelessly disregarded. *Daff* (i.e., *doff*) is from *do off*, 'put off.'

97. **And bid it pass.** 'Let the world pass' was a common exclamation of careless revellers. 'Don't worry about anything. Enjoy the present moment and let the serious affairs of life take care of themselves.' Cowl compares *The Triall of Treasure*, 1567 'Enter Luste like a gallaunt, singing this songe. Hey howe care away let the world passe'; and Udall, *Roister Doister*, iii, 3, 42 (ed. Manly, II, 45) 'Be of good cheere, man, and let the worlde passe!' The drunkard Christopher Sly varies the phrase: 'Let the world slide'; 'Sit by my side and let the world slip. We shall ne'er be younger' (*Taming of the Shrew*, Induction, i, 6; ii, 146, 147).

98, 99. **estridges:** ostriches.—**that.** The antecedents are *Prince* and *comrades* (ll 95, 96), not *estridges*.—**Bated:** were flapping their wings, 1 e., were displaying their fine array *Bate* (French *battre*) was a falconer's term

100. **images:** images of the saints on holy days.

103. **Wanton:** sportive

104, 105. **beaver:** helmet—**cushes:** cuisses—armour for the thighs

106. **feathered:** wing-footed ('alipes,' Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, xi, 312); wearing winged sandals. Cf *Henry V*, ii, Prologue, 7 'With winged heels, as English Mercuries.'

107. **vaulted:** he vaulted.

109, 110. **wind.** Synonymous with *turn*.—**Pegasus:** the winged horse of ancient myth—**witch:** bewitch, charm.

112. **agues.** Malarial fever (fever and ague) was prevalent in Shakespeare's time on account of the undrained marshes. It was thought to be caused by vapours drawn up from marsh-land by the sun, especially in early spring Cf. *King Lear*, ii, 4, 168-170:

Infect her beauty,
You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the pow'rful sun,
To fall and blast her pride!

113. **in their trim:** in their fine array—'like animals decorated for sacrifice' (Wright).

114. **the fire-ey'd maid:** Bellona, the goddess of war. Cf. *Macbeth*, i, 2, 54: 'Bellona's bridegroom.'

118-120. **reprisal:** prize, booty.—**taste:** try.—**a thunderbolt:** a fiery bolt, or stone missile, supposed to be discharged from the clouds by the thunder and to destroy whatever it strikes. Cf. *Julius Caesar*, i, 3, 49, and note.

126. **draw his power:** muster his troops. Cf l. 18.

129. **battle:** army.

132. **us.** Emphatic.—**serve:** suffice for—**so great:** even so great

134 **Die all . . . merrily:** If we must all die, let us die cheerfully.

Scene II.

2 **Sutton Co'fil'**: Sutton Coldfield in Warwickshire, near Birmingham.

5. **Lay out**: Pay out of your own pocket.

6. **makes an angel**: makes ten shillings that you owe me.

9. **I'll answer the coinage**: I'll be responsible for any coinage that the bottle does.

12-20. **sous'd gurnet**: a pickled gurnard—a fish of no great size.—**press**: conscription, forced enlistment.—**contracted**: engaged to be married.—**the banes**: the banns—the announcement of intended marriage, made in church by the parson, who called upon any who knew of an impediment to the marriage to speak out. The banns were thus proclaimed on three successive Sundays. After the third proclamation the marriage could take place.—**commodity**: lot.—**warm slaves**: well-to-do and comfort-loving fellows.—**lieve**: lief.—**caliver**: a kind of light musket.—**press'd**: impressed, conscripted.—**me**. Ethical dative. See II, 4, 114, note.—**toasts-and-butter**: delicate feeders, quite unused to soldiers' rough-and-ready fare. Malone compares Fynes Morison, *Itinerary*, 1617, Part III, 1, 3, p 53: 'Londiners, and all within the sound of Bow-Bell, are in reproch called Cocknies, and eaters of buttered tostes.'

21. **bought out their services**: paid me money to be released from service. Then Falstaff had proceeded to enlist poverty-stricken recruits in their place. This kind of corrupt dealing was a common abuse in old times Steevens quotes *The Voyages unto Cadiz*, 1596 (Hakluyt, 1599, I, 607): 'A certaine Lieutenant . . . was by sound of Drumme publicly in all the streetes disgraced, or rather after a sort disgraded, and cashiered for bearing any farther Office at that time, for the taking of money by the way of corruption, of certaine prest souldiers in the Countrey, and for placing of others in their roomes, more vnfit for service, and of lesse sufficiency and abilitie.'

22-27. **charge**: company.—**of ancients**: of ensigns—literally,

standard-bearers. Discharged soldiers had a hard lot in old times. They often took to begging or robbery for a livelihood. See Martin Parker's ballad, 'The Maunding [i.e., Begging] Souldier: or, The Fruits of Warre is Beggery' (*Roxburghe Ballads*, ed. Chappell, III, 110 ff; cf. *Pepys Ballads*, ed. Rollins, VI, 255 ff).—**gentlemen of companies**. An old technical term for a soldier (apparently a volunteer) who was superior to an ordinary private and yet not definitely an officer. His precise rank, indeed, was always a matter of dispute. Cf. *Henry V*, iv, 1, 37-39.—**Lazarus**. Cf. III, 3, 34. See *Luke*, xvi, 19 ff.—**painted cloth**. A cheap substitute for tapestry hangings. See *2 Henry IV*, II, 1, 152-159, *As You Like It*, III, 2, 291, note—and **such as**: and, besides, of others who, etc.—**discarded**: discharged.—**unjust**: dishonest.—**revolted tapsters**: runaway wine-waiters.—**trade-fall'n**: fallen away from their trade; out of business.

27. **cankers**: canker-worms; creatures that are bred in time of peace and prey upon the public. Steevens compares Nashe, *Piers Penullesse*, 1592 (ed. McKerrow, I, 213): 'all the canker-wormes that breede on the rust of peace.' For the idea that long intervals of peace cause general corruption in the state see Bacon's essay *Of the True Greatness of Kingdoms and Estates*: 'No body can be healthful without exercise, neither natural body nor politic; and certainly, to a kingdom or estate, a just and honourable war is the true exercise. A civil war, indeed, is like the heat of a fever, but a foreign war is like the heat of exercise, and serveth to keep the body in health; for in a slothful peace, both courages will effeminate and manners [i.e., morals] corrupt.' Cf. *Hamlet*, iv, 4, 27-29.

28. **more dishonourable ragged than an old fac'd ancient**: more ragged than an old patched flag—and dishonourable in their raggedness. *Dishonourable* does not apply to the flag but only to these vagabonds. *Ancient* in this sense is merely a mispronounced form of *ensign*.

31, 32. **Prodigals**. See *Luke*, xv, 11 ff.—**draff**: garbage.

44-52. **villains**: a general term of contempt.—**gyves**: fetters.

—out of prison. It was common to release convicts on condition of their enlisting—but. Rowe's emendation for 'not,' the reading of the Quartos and Folios—two napkins. Cf. Webster, *The Duchess of Malfy*, I, 1, 36-38 (ed. Lucas, II, 38): 'I fell into the Gallies in your service, where, for two yeares together, I wore two Towells in stead of a shirt, with a knot on the shoulder, after the fashion of a Romaine Mantle.'—a herald's coat without sleeves: a so-called *tabard*—a loose sleeveless coat, the uniform of a herald.—that's all one: that makes no difference, that's no matter.—on every hedge: where it was spread to dry or bleach. Cf. *Winter's Tale*, IV, 3, 5-8.

53. blown: puffed up, swollen Cf. II, 4, 364, 365.—quilt: padded fellow,—literally, a padded coverlet.

54-58 mad wag: wild fellow —I cry you mercy: I beg your pardon (for seeming to overlook you). Cf. I, 3, 212.

61 powers: troops.

64. never fear me: don't be worried about me. Cf. IV, 1, 24.

71. to toss: for tossing on a pike. Steevens compares *3 Henry VI*, I, 1, 244, 245

76. for: as for.

85, 86. Falstaff adapts an old proverb. According to Copland's *Jyl of Breynitford's Testament*, ll. 204, 205 (ed. Furnivall, p. 14), he is not wise

that goeth to a fray at the begynny[n]g,
And to a good meale at the latter endyng

Cf. *Edmond Ironside* (Malone Society ed., ll. 1135, 1136)·

Edrick. Sure ye are a tall [1 e, valiant] mann

Stich I [1 e, ay] sir at the end of a fraye, and begininge of a feast,

Camden, *Remaines*, ed. 1629, p. 268· 'It is ill conning to the end of a Feast and beginning of a Fray.' See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, p. 36.

Scene III.

3. **supply:** reinforcements.

5. **be advis'd:** take our advice, listen to reason.

7. **fear.** Dissyllabic.

10. **well-respected:** well-considered, i.e., based upon sound principles of conduct. Vernon makes a distinction between honour as thus determined and the fantastic code of foolhardy valour.—**bid me on:** call upon me to go forward.

17. **leading:** experience in leadership in war.

19. **horse:** cavalry.

22. **pride:** spirit. Synonymous with *mettle*.

24. **That:** so that.

26. **journey-bated:** worn out by travel. To *bate* is to 'abate.'
Cf. iii, 3, 2.

31. **respect:** attention.

33. **of our determination:** of our party; on our side.

36. **quality:** party.

38, 39. **defend:** forbid.—**still:** ever, always.—**limit:** bounds.—**true rule:** right conduct. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, ii, 3, 132.

41. **my charge:** my errand; the message entrusted to me.

42, 43. **griefs:** grievances —**whereupon:** for what reason. *On* or *upon* was common in a causal sense. This use survives in *on compulsion*, *on purpose* —**conjure:** call up, as it were by magic spells (such as were used to raise devils).—**civil:** well-behaved, orderly.

45. **If that:** if. *That* is often annexed to particles and relative adverbs: as, *though that*, *since that*, *because that*, *when that*, etc.

51. **suggestion:** evil suggestion—almost equivalent to 'temptation.' Cf. *2 Henry IV*, iv, 4, 45: 'mingled with venom of suggestion'; *Macbeth*, i, 3, 134: 'Why do I yield to that suggestion?'; *Othello*, ii, 3, 357, 358:

When devils will the blackest sins put on,
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows.

56 **not six-and-twenty strong.** Cf. Holinshed: 'and with him not past threescore persons, as some write.'

60. **swear.** Cf. *Richard II*, II, 3, 148, 149.

62. **To sue his livery:** to prove his title and procure the delivery into his own possession of his lands, which were then held by King Richard. Bolingbroke's father, the Duke of Lancaster, held his lands as tenant of the crown, and on his death they were (according to law) taken by the King. The heir was obliged to make suit in the Court of Wards in order to inherit them. Cf. *Richard II*, II, 1, 201-205; II, 3, 129, 130.—**beg his peace:** i.e., from the King.

63. **terms of zeal:** protestations of devoted loyalty.

65. **perform'd it:** fulfilled his oath

68 **The more and less:** the high and low—with cap and knee: cap in hand and with bended knee.

70. **Attended him:** awaited his coming.—**in lanes:** in rows or lines, one on each side of the road

73 **golden:** richly dressed.

74. **as greatness knows itself:** as his power gradually recognizes how great it has become.

75. **me.** Ethical dative. See II, 4, 114, note.

76. **while his blood was poor:** while he was still poor in spirit—humble-minded.

78. **forsooth.** An ironical interjection. Cf. I, 3, 140

79. **strait:** over-strict, and therefore oppressive.

81 **upon:** against.

82, 83. **face:** pretence, pretext—**seeming brow:** appearance, guise.

87, 88. **In deputation:** in charge of the realm as his deputies.—**personal . . . war:** personally engaged in the war in Ireland

92. **in the neck of that:** immediately after that. Cf. *Sonnet* 131: 'A thousand groans, . . . One on another's neck'; *A Warning for Faire Women*, I (ed. Simpson, II, 267): 'In the neck of this I will devise Some stratagem.'—**task'd:** taxed.

94. **were well plac'd:** had his rightful position in the state.

95, 96. **engag'd:** pledged, i.e., as a hostage. Cf. V, 2, 44.—to

lie forfeited: to be held prisoner (like a pawned article that has not been redeemed). Cf. l. 108

97 **Disgrac'd** . . . **victories**: made my victories the means of disgracing me.

98. **by intelligence**: by means of spies.

99. **Rated**: berated; scolded, expelled with contumely. See 1, 3, 12-21.

100. **dismiss'd my father**. See 1, 3, 122, 123.

103-105. **this head of safety**: this armed troop, mustered to protect us. Cf. 1, 3, 284. Hotspur (as Cowl suggests) plays with the word *head*, which means also 'source.'—**withal**: at the same time.—**his title**: i e., to the crown.—**Too indirect**: too irregular—literally, too far from the direct line of succession.

108. **impawn'd**: left as a pledge or surety. Westmoreland was thus impawned. See v, 2, 44.

109, 110. **a safe return**: i e., my uncle's safe return.—**mine uncle**: the Earl of Worcester

111. **our purposes**: our proposals, our terms.

112. **grace**: pardon and favour from the King.

Scene IV.

1. **Sir Michael**. Unknown to history. Doubtless a priest in the service of the Archbishop. *Sir* (*Dominus*) was a priest's title.—**brief**: letter.

2. **Marshal**. Trisyllabic: *Mar-e-shal*. This is Mowbray, an important character in 2 *Henry IV*.

4 **To whom**: to those to whom.

5 **How . . . import**: how important they are.

7 **tenour**: purport.

10. **bide the touch**: stand the test. A figure from the use of the touchstone to test gold. Cf. *Pericles*, ii, 2, 37: 'gold that's by the touchstone tried.'

12. **power**. See i, 1, 22, note.

15. **in the first proportion**: larger than any of the other troops.

17. a **rated sinew**: a support on which they counted.
18 **prophecies**. Cf. iii, 1, 148-155.
20. **wage**: risk.
25. **head**: armed troop.
31, 32. **moe**: more—**corrivals**: associates, comrades Cf. i, 3,
207.—**dear men Of estimation . . . arms**: men who are highly
valued as experienced generals.
35. **prevent**: forestall; hinder by precautionary measures.
Prevent regularly keeps the force of *pre-* in Shakespeare.
37. **visit**: come against. Cf. *Coriolanus*, iv, 5, 146, 147:

Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,
Or rudely visit them in parts remote

ACT V. Scene I.

1-3. **How bloodily**, etc. A red sun at dawn is a traditional sign of stormy weather. An old rhyme, still current, runs thus:

Red sky in the morning,
Sailors take warning,
Red sky at night,
Sailors' delight

Cf. Middleton, *Anything for a Quiet Life*, iv, 1, 101, 102 (ed. Bullen, V, 305): 'as malevolent unto you as a red morning, that doth still foretell a foul day to follow' See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, pp. 526, 527.—**busky**: bosky, wooded.—**pale At his distemp'rature**: as if terrified by the sun's disorder, i.e., unnatural (literally, unhealthy) appearance. Cf. iii, 1, 24, 25.

4 **trumpet**: trumpeter.—**his purposes**: 'that which the sun portends' (Johnson).

7, 8. **sympathize**: agree; be in accord. Cf. *Henry V*, iii, 7, 158, 159.—**foul**: bad weather. Cf. *Macbeth*, i, 3, 38.

15, 16. **again unknot . . . war**: untangle the disorder in which war (hated by all) has involved the realm.

17. **that obedient orb**: that sphere—loyal obedience—which should naturally regulate your actions. The metaphor is de-

rived from the old astronomy. The earth was the centre of the universe. The planets were fixed in hollow spheres concentric with the earth. Cf. v, 4, 65, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, ii, 1, 153: 'And certain stars shot madly from their spheres.'

19. **an éxhal'd meteor.** See i, 1, 10, note. For the accent see i, 3, 31, note.

20, 21. **A prodigy of fear:** a terrifying omen of evil.—**a portént:** an ominous sign.—**Of broached mischief . . . times:** of harm now let loose and destined to bring disaster to future generations. To *broach* is, literally, to 'tap' a cask of some liquid.—**únborn.** For the accent see i, 3, 31, note.

24-26. **entertain:** pass—hours. Dissyllabic. Often spelled *howers*.—**the day of this dislike:** this time of enmity.

27. **sought.** Emphasized and dissyllabic. Cf. iii, 1, 67, note.

29. **chewet:** Either 'you fried mince pie,' or, less probably, 'you chattering jackdaw.' Perhaps the Prince has both senses in mind. There was no law for punsters in the Elizabethan age. Cf. Middleton, *The Witch*, ii, 1, 50, 51 (ed. Bullen, V, 382): 'bottles of wine, chewets, and currant-custards.'

32. **remember:** remind.

34. **my staff . . . break.** See *Richard II*, ii, 3, 26-28. Worcester, Holinshed records, being 'lord steward of the kings house, . . . brake his white staffe (which is the representing signe and token of his office) and without delaie went to duke Henrie.'

35. **posted:** rode posthaste.

38. **nothing:** by no means; not at all.

44, 45. **new-fall'n:** that had recently fallen to your lot.—**Gaunt:** John of Gaunt. See ii, 2, 70, note.

49. **the absent King:** the absence of King Richard.

50. **the injuries . . . time:** the abuses incident to a time of misgovernment.

56, 57. **occasion:** the opportunity.—**general:** i.e., of the whole kingdom, not merely of your own dukedom.

60. **ungentle gull:** rude nestling.—**bird:** young, offspring.—**the sparrow:** in whose nest the young cuckoo is hatched. The cuckoo lays its eggs in other birds' nests.

61. **did oppress our nest:** tyrannized over our whole nest

63, 64 **our love:** we who loved you — **For fear of swallowing.**
Cf. *King Lear*, 1, 4, 235, 236.

The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long
That it had it [i.e., its] head bit off by it young

68-69. **head . . . usage:** army, by means of which we now stand in opposition to you, induced by causes that you yourself have contrived against yourself by your unnatural treatment of us.—**dangerous countenance:** your threatening behaviour.

70. **troth:** one's pledged word.

71. **in . . . enterprise:** at the outset of your undertaking.

72, 73. **articulate:** articulated; drawn up in formal shape, item by item. Participles in *-ate* (Latin *-atus*) are common: e.g., *create*, *coagulate*, *consecrate*, *excommunicate*.—**market crosses:** crosses that stand in the public squares of market towns.

74. **face:** trim, adorn.

76. **changelings:** fickle persons; turncoats — **discontents:** malcontents.

77. **gape:** listen eagerly, open-mouthed. Cf. *Edward III*, iii, 1, 15, 16 (ed. Brooke, *Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p. 82): 'such as gape for nothing else But changing and alteration of the state.' — **rub the elbow:** hug themselves (in delight), with arms crossed and each elbow in the palm of the other hand—or some similar gesture. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v, 2, 109, 110: 'One rubb'd his elbow thus, . . . and swore A better speech was never spoke before'; D'Avenant, *News from Plymouth*, iii (ed. 1873, IV, 148): 'You'll give me leave to rub my elbow first, In sign that I am taken [i.e., charmed].' So to *claw* one's *elbow* is to 'flatter'. as in *Respublica*, 1553, 1, 3 (ed. Brandl, p. 290): 'What clawest thowe myne elbowe? . . . Ye flaterabundus yowe.'

80, 81. **water colours:** slight pretexts.—**moody:** sullen, discontented.—**beggars.** Object of the verb *did want*.

83. **both our armies:** i.e., both the King's and Percy's.

84. **dearly.** Trisyllabic.

88. **This present enterprise . . . head:** if we strike this present enterprise (the rebellion) off his account—disregard it in our judgment of him.

89. **braver:** nobler. A general term of commendation for fine qualities—not restricted to valour.

95. **account:** regard, think.

98. **estimation:** reputation.

101. **we.** The 'royal *we*.'

102. **Albeit:** although.

105. **upon . . . part:** by taking sides with your kinsman—Percy.

106. **grace:** pardon and favour

111. **wait on us:** are my attendants; are ready to act at a word from me.

114. **take it advisedly:** consider my offer carefully.

118. **charge:** his division or troop.

119. **on their answer:** as soon as they have answered. The King agrees with the Prince in expecting a refusal.

121, 122. **bestride me:** i.e., in order to defend me. Cf. Marston, *The Malcontent*, 1604, II, 5:

Ignoble villaine, did I for this bestride
Thy wounded limbes, for this?

Comedy of Errors, v, 1, 190–193; *Macbeth*, iv, 3, 4, and note.—so! well and good!

123. **a Colossus.** The Colossus of Rhodes, one of the wonders of the ancient world, was a huge statue dedicated to the sun. It stood near the harbour; and the current belief in Shakespeare's time was that it bestrode the entrance of the harbour, so that ships sailed between its legs.

127. **owest God a death.** Cf. *2 Henry IV*, III, 2, 250–255: 'A man can die but once; we owe God a death. . . . He that dies this year is quit for the next'; *Sir Thomas More*, III, 1, 116 (ed. Brooke, *Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p. 397): 'I doo owe God a death, and I must pay him'; *The Repentance of Robert*

Greene, 1592 (ed Grosart, XII, 163). 'I scoffingly made them this answer. Tush, what better is he that dies in his bed than he that endes his life at Tyburne, all owe God a death: if I may haue my desire while I lue, I am satisfied, let me shift after death as I may'; *A Dialogue (Ballads from Manuscripts*, II, 176): 'Fiat voluntas Dei, then say I, We owe a death, and once we needes must dye.' The origin of the phrase is indicated by the celebrated preacher, Henry Smith (died 1591) in *A Comfortable Speech (Sermons*, 1609, p. 598). 'I owe God a death, as his Sonne died for me.'

130, 131. **pricks**: spurs—**prick me off**: check my name off the list (of living men). To *prick* a name in a list was to mark it with a puncture or dot. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, iv, 1, 1, where the Triumvirs are marking names for proscription: 'These many, then, shall die; their names are prick'd.'

131. **Can honour**, etc. Here Falstaff begins to speak in the tone and manner of a person catechizing a boy; and, in the answers, he imitates the boy who speaks mechanically, having learned them by heart

132. **set to a leg**: set a broken leg or attach a leg that has been cut off. The accent is on *to*.—**grief**: pain.

134, 135. **A trim reckoning!** A fine sum total! This ironical comment interrupts the steady course of the 'catechism.'

135. **a Wednesday**: on Wednesday; last Wednesday.

136. **insensible**: not perceptible by the senses.

138. **Detraction**: slander.—**suffer**: allow.—**I'll none of it**: I'll have nothing to do with it.

139. **scutcheon**: hatchment—a funeral tablet, with coat of arms and mourning emblems, set up on a tomb or a house-front, or over a gate. Cf. *Hamlet*, iv, 5, 214: 'No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones.'—**so ends my catechism**. Those critics who take Falstaff's 'catechism' as a serious confession of faith, and therefore as proof of cowardice, lack a sense of humour. What it expresses is the half-cynical mood of a veteran soldier who has outlived the romance of warfare. The contrast with the Prince's untried eagerness for single combat

with Percy is complete. No doubt Shakespeare remembered the soliloquy of Basilisco,¹ the boastful coward in *Soliman and Perseda*, v, 3, 63 ff. (Kyd, ed. Boas, pp. 223, 224), but Falstaff is no Basilisco.

Scene II.

3. **undone:** ruined.

6, 7. **suspect us still:** always be suspicious of us.—in: in punishing.

8. **Suspicion . . . eyes.** An Alexandrine. The Quartos and Folios read 'Supposition.' Rowe made the correction. So Rumour, who speaks the Induction in *2 Henry IV*, is 'painted full of tongues.'

10, 11. **ne'er so tame:** be he ever so tame; no matter how tame he is.—**trick:** trait.

12. **sad:** serious.—**merrily:** cheerful.

13. **Interpretation:** i.e., on the King's part.

18. **And . . . privilege:** and his fault has the additional excuse, in men's eyes, of having been committed by one who goes by a nickname that gives a kind of authorization for any wild actions.

19. **a spleen:** mere whim and impulse. See ii, 3, 81, note.

20. **his offences . . . head:** his offences against the King may be forgotten and forgiven so far as Hotspur himself is concerned, but they are still alive (in the King's memory) as acts for which *I* am held accountable.

21. **We . . . on:** We (it will be said) enticed him to take part in the rebellion.

22, 23. **his corruption:** his guilt.—**spring:** source.

25. **In any case:** on any consideration; whatever the result may be.

26. **Deliver:** report.

29. **Deliver up:** release.

¹See *King John*, i, 1, 244. 'Knight, knight, good mother, Basilisco-like!'

31. **bid**: offer.—**presently**: at once.
33. **Douglas**. Here trisyllabic: *Doug-l-as*.
34. **Marry, and shall**: Indeed I will.
35. **no seeming mercy**: nothing that looks like mercy.
- 38, 39. **mended**: amended, made up for.—**By . . . forsworn**: by now taking a false oath that he did not violate his former oath?
- 40, 41. **will . . . in us**: he is determined (so he says) to scourge us as rebels and traitors.
43. **brave**: haughty. See i, 1, 53, note.
44. **engag'd**: held as a hostage for the safe return of Worcester and Vernon from their interview with the King. See iv, 3, 108–111; v, 1, 9 ff.
45. **cannot choose but**. Cf. i, 3, 279, note.
48. **the quarrel**: the whole cause (for which we fight).
- 49–51. **draw short breath**: i.e., in fight.—**show'd**: appeared.—**his tasking**: his challenge. To *task* or *tax* is, literally, to 'take one to task,' to 'call one to account.' Cf. iv, 1, 9.
53. **urg'd**: offered or proposed. To *urge* often means merely to 'propose,' 'suggest,' 'mention,' without the implication of urgency or special emphasis.
55. **proof of arms**: test of skill in combat.
56. **gave . . . man**: he gave you all the dues of a man—all the praise that is due to manly qualities.
60. **By . . . with you**: by always insisting that no praise, however great, could do you justice.
62. **cital**: mention.
- 64, 65. **mast'rd there . . . instantly**: were master, on that occasion, of the power to teach and readiness to learn—both at the same moment.
- 67, 68. **envy**: malice, malignity. Cf. i, 3, 27—**owe**: own, possess.
69. **in his wantonness**: in the time of his sportive youth.
72. **libertine**: a 'loose liver' in general. The word had not become so specialized as in modern usage. The old readings are 'a libertie' and 'at liberty.' Capell made the correction. See

Textual Notes. *Wild at liberty* might perhaps mean 'unrestrained in the freedom that he allowed himself.'

75. **That:** so that.

76. **fellows:** comrades.

77 ff. **Better . . . persuasion:** Consider what you have to accomplish in this battle, and that thought will rouse your courage better than any exhortation from me, for I am no orator.

85. **Still:** always, i.e., in the case of every man—if no man's life were longer than an hour.

87. **brave:** glorious. See 1, 1, 53, note.

88. **for:** as for.—**fair:** just, righteous.

95, 96. **withal:** with.—**the adventure:** the chances.

97. **Esperance! Percy!** The battle cry of the Percys. See 11, 3, 74, note. The final *-e* is pronounced.

100. **heaven to earth:** 'One might wager heaven to earth' (Warburton). The odds are infinity to nothing.

Scene III

1. (stage direction). **Alarum:** the trumpet signal to arms—(*all' arme*)—to the onset.

2. **Thou crossest me:** You cross my path continually.

15. **tríumph'd.** Note the accent. Cf. v, 4, 14.

21. **Semblably furnished like:** so armed and attired as to seem exactly like.

22. **A fool go with thy soul:** i.e., the epithet 'fool.' 'Farewell to thy foolish soul' A standard form of gibe at parting. Steevens quotes Whetstone, *Promos and Cassandra*, 1578, 11, 4: 'Goe and a knaue go with thee.' Cf. *Soliman and Perseda*, 1, 3 (Kyd, ed Boas, p. 174): 'Take the braginst [i.e., most bragging] knaue in Christendom with thee'; compare the Fool's pun in *King Lear*, 1, 4, 338, 339: 'Take the fool with thee.'—**whither:** whithersoever.

25. **in his coarts:** i.e., with the royal coat of arms on the coat that covers the armour. Douglas puns on the word.

27. **wardrop:** wardrobe.

29. **fairly for the day:** in a way that bids fair to win the day.

30. **shot-free:** without paying the shot, i.e., the scot, the reckoning at taverns. *Shot* in this use is another form of *scot*. Cf. v, 4, 113.

31. **scoring.** A pun on *scoring*: (1) scoring up an account (literally, by cutting notches in a tally stick; then, by making chalk marks: see ii, 4, 32), (2) making cuts or slashes (on one's body or head).—Soft! Wait a moment! See i, 3, 155, note.

32. **Here's no vanity!** Here's a good example how vain (empty) a thing this *honour* is!

38. **rag-of-muffins.** An old form of *ragamuffins*.

39, 40. **for the town's end:** only fit to haunt the places where the highway enters the town—in a walled city, the gates Vagabond beggars gathered there, to take advantage of the traffic.

43. **unreveng'd:** unavenged.

45, 46. **Turk Gregory.** Apparently Falstaff refers to Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand), of whom wild stories were told. *Turk* implies ferocious belligerency.

48. **paid Percy:** given him his payment, settled his account. Cf. ii, 4, 212; v, 4, 113.—**I have made him sure:** I have made sure of him. Cf. *Macbeth*, iii, 4, 25, 26:

Macbeth But Banquo's safe?

Murderer. Ay, my good lord Safe in a ditch he bides

49. **He is indeed:** He is indeed *sure*—safe and sound. The Prince puns on *sure*.

55. **dally:** waste time in trifling.

56. **pierce.** Pronounced *perce*.

57. **so:** well and good.

58. **a carbonado:** 'a piece of meat cut crosswise for the grid-iron' (Johnson).

60. **there's an end:** that's the conclusion of the whole matter, that winds up the subject

Scene IV.

5, 6. **make up:** advance—**amaze:** confound; disconcert.

14 **triumph.** Cf. v, 3, 15.

15. **breathe:** pause to take breath. Cf. l. 47.

20. **respect thee as:** hold thee in as high regard as

21. **at the point:** at swords' points.

22, 23. **lustier maintenance:** more vigorous action—**un-grown.** For the accent see i, 3, 31, note.

25. **Hydra's heads.** As fast as one of the Hydra's many heads was cut off, two heads grew in its place. See the note on l. 50.

27. **those colours:** the colours in the King's coat of arms

34. **assay:** make trial of

39. **like:** likely

44. **Cheerly.** Merely an encouraging exclamation.

48. **opinion:** reputation.

49 **mak'st some tender of my life:** holdest my life in some regard.

50. **rescue.** Holinshed reports. 'The king . . . aduentured so farre, that (as some write) the earle Dowglas strake him downe, & at that instant slue Sir Walter Blunt, and three other, apparelled in the kings sute and clothing, saing: "I maruell to see so many kings thus suddenlie arise one in the necke of an other" The king, indeed, was raised' But Holinshed does not tell who rescued him.

58. **Make up to:** Advance to

65, 66. **stars:** planets.—**sphere.** See v, 1, 17, note.—**brook:** endure.

75. **Well said:** Well done. With regard to the question whether Falstaff is a coward or not, we should note that he has been in the thick of the fight (v, 3, 38-40) and that he makes his appearance (as here) in the most dangerous possible places.

79. **hast won.** See iii, 2, 150, note. Holinshed informs us that Hotspur was killed, but he does not say who killed him.

81-83. **But thoughts . . . stop:** But *thoughts* (which are absolutely dependent upon life) and *life* (which is subject to time) and even *time itself* (which measures all things earthly) must come to an end.—**time's fool.** As the fool is subjected to every whim of the other members of a household, so life is 'the fool and sport of time' (Johnson), for the length of one's life depends, as it were, on the mere whim of time.—**Must have a stop.** 'And the angel . . . sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, . . . That there should be time no longer' (*Revelation*, x, 5, 6).

83. **prophesy.** It was an old idea that a dying man has some measure of prophetic power, since he looks, as it were, into the world to come. Cf. *Richard II*, II, 1, 31, 32:

Methinks I am a prophet new inspir'd
And thus, expiring, do foretell of him

87. **brave:** noble. See i, 1, 53, note.

88. **Ill-weav'd.** Not meant of ambition in general, but only of such ambition as Hotspur's, which, the Prince thinks, was ill-conceived—unwarranted.

89. **When that.** See iv, 3, 45, note.

93. **stout:** brave, valiant.

95. **make so dear a show of zeal:** allow the warmth of my admiration to display itself so openly.

96. **favours:** a scarf or the like. So called because such things were worn as signs of a lady's favour.

97. **in thy behalf:** on thy part; as thy representative.

100, 101. **ignominy.** Often shortened in pronunciation to *ignomy*, and sometimes so spelled.—**epitaph.** Cf. Dekker and Webster, *Sir Thomas Wyatt*, 1602 (ed. Dyce, 1871, p. 195):

Peace rest his soul!
His sins be buried in his grave,
And not remember'd in his epitaph!

105. **I should have . . . of thee:** I should miss thee wofully (with a pun on the literal meaning of *heavy*).

106. **vanity**: the vain pursuits of life; frivolity. Cf. v, 3, 32.

109. **Embowell'd**: disembowelled (for embalming).—**by-and-by**: presently.

112 **to powder me**: to salt me down; to pickle me.—**'Sblood**. See 1, 2, 82, note.

113, 114. **termagant**: raging. In the Middle Ages all Mohammedans were thought to be idolaters. One of their gods, it was believed, was *Termagant* (or *Tervagant*)—a ferocious demon. The origin of the name is unknown. See *Hamlet*, iii, 2, 15, and note.—**paid me scot and lot too**: given me payment in full; settled accounts with me to the last item. *Scot and lot* was an old term for a kind of tax levied in proportion to one's means. *Scot* (without *lot*) was one's account at an inn—one's 'hotel bill.' Cf. 'shot-free' (¶, 3, 30). For *paid* see v, 3, 48.

115. **the counterfeit of a man**: the imitation or picture of a man. Cf. *Macbeth*, ii, 2, 53, 54: 'The sleeping and the dead Are but as pictures.'

117. **thereby liveth**: saves his life by that means.

118, 119. **The better part of valour is discretion**. *Part* is 'quality'—not 'portion': 'Bravery that is not directed by good judgment is not true valour: it is mere foolhardiness.' Such is the serious meaning of the maxim that Falstaff applies in witty defence of his stratagem. Cf. Apperson, *English Proverbs*, p. 153.—**in**: in the exercise of.—**Zounds**. See 1, 2, 112, note.

123. **Why . . . I?** This foreshadows the story that Falstaff means to tell.

133. **bravely**: nobly. See 1, 1, 53, note.—**flesh'd**: initiated. To *flesh* often means to 'give one the first taste.'

134. **soft!** See 1, 3, 155, note.

138. **fantasy**: imagination.

142. **a Jack**: a low rascal.

149. **so**: well and good.

150-157. **the sin**: i.e., the sin of discrediting my report and so refusing me my just reward —**take it upon my death**: swear with death as the penalty for perjury. Cf. ii, 4, 8.—**eat . . . sword**. Cf. 2 *Henry VI*, iv, 10, 30-32: 'I'll make thee eat iron

like an ostridge and swallow my sword like a great pin', *Troilus and Cressida*, II, 3, 227: 'A should eat swords first.'

161, 162. **a lie**: i.e., a lie of yours.—**may do thee grace**: can win thee any favour.—**gild it**: ornament thy lie.—**happiest**: most felicitous; finest.

163. **sounds retreat**: gives notice to cease pursuing the enemy. Cf. *1 Henry VI*, II, 2, 3: 'Here sound retreat and cease our hot pursuit.'

164. **the highest of the field**: 'the highest ground, from which the whole field of battle could be seen' (Wright).

166. **follow . . . for reward**. There is a slight pun on *follow* in the sense of 'be one's follower.'—**for reward**: rather than for loyal devotion. Cf. *2 Henry VI*, II, 3, 108: 'Come, fellow, follow us for thy reward'; *Two Gentlemen*, I, 1, 94: 'Thou for wages followest thy master'

168. **purge**: take cleansing medicines.

Scene V.

2, 3 **Ill-spirited**: evil-minded—**we**. The royal *we*—**grace**: promise of favour.—**terms of love**: loving words. Cf. v, 1, 104-108.

5. **Misuse . . . trust**: pervert the nature of the duty entrusted to thee by Harry Percy.

10. **intelligence**: information.

12, 13. **patiently**: calmly—**avoided**. Dissyllabic *avoid'd*

15. **pause upon**: postpone consideration of

20. **Upon the foot of fear**: fleeing in a panic.

24. **dispose of him**: have the disposal of him.

26. **This honourable bounty**: the honour of this gracious act.

33. **give away**: i.e., by passing it on—conferring it on Douglas

34. **power**: army. See, I, 1, 22, note.

36. **bend you**: direct your course—**dearest**. *Dear* is often used merely to emphasize the meaning of the noun that it modifies Cf. III, 2, 123 and note

37. **meet:** i.e., in a hostile encounter.—**Scroop:** Richard Scroop, the Archbishop of York.

40. **the Earl of March.** See 1, 1, 38, note.

41, 42. **his:** its. See 1, 1, 18, note.—**Meeting the check:** if it meets with the hindrance. *Check* also suggests 'rebuke'—a sense which it often bears.

43. **business.** Trisyllabic.—**fair:** successfully.

TEXTUAL NOTES

[Qq indicates the agreement of eight Quartos—Q₁ (1598), Q₂ (1599), Q₃ (1604), Q₄ (1608), Q₅ (1613), Q₆ (1622), Q₇ (1632), Q₈ (1639). Q₁ without mention of the others indicates the agreement of the same eight except in some detail of spelling. Ff indicates the agreement of all four Folios—F₁ (1623), F₂ (1632), F₃ (1664), F₄ (1685). F₁ without mention of the others indicates the agreement of the four except in some detail of spelling. The figures 1 and 2 (as in Rowe₁ and Rowe₂) indicate first and second editions. Conjectures are marked 'conj.', omissions, 'om']

Act 1, Scene 1, 62 a dear, a] deere, a (Q₁), deare, a (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), a deare, and (Q₅₋₈), a deere and (F₁)

76, 77 In . . . is] Given to the King in Qq Ff

Scene 2, 19 king] a king (Q₁), king or King (the rest).

31 we steal] we—steal (Pope)

34, 35 proof now: a] prooffe Now a (Q₁₋₈ F₁ F₂), prooffe: Now a (Q₇ Q₈), proof Now a (F₂ F₄), Proof, now *A (Rowe₁)

89 smiles (Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)] smiles (the rest).

125 Sir Iohn Sack and Sugar? Jack,] sir Iohn Sacke, and Sugar Iacke? (Q₁₋₄); sir Iohn Sacke and Sugar, Iacke [Iacke (Q₅)]? (Q₅₋₈), Sir Iohn Sacke and Sugar: Iacke? (F₁); Sir Iohn Sacke and Sugar. Iacke? (F₂); Sir Iohn Sack and Sugar, Jack? (F₂ F₄).

177 thou (Pope)] the (Qq Ff).

181 Bardolph, Peto] Haruey, Rossill (Q₁ F₁). * Corrected by Theobald
214 lies] lues (Q₁); lyes or lies (the rest).

Scene 3, 62 destroy'd (Q₅ Q₇ Q₈ Ff)] destroyed (Q₁ Q₂ Q₃); destruide (Q₄); destroyd (Q₅).

84 the] that (Q₁), the (the rest).

108 base (Ff)] bare (Qq)

201 Hor. (Q₅₋₈ Ff)] om. Q₁₋₄.

234 I will (Pope)] ile or Ile or I'll (Qq Ff).

236 wasp-stung] waspe-stung (Q₁), waspe- [or Waspe- or Wasp- or wasp-] tongue (Q₂₋₈), Waspe-tongu'd (F₁)

256 for (Ff)] om Qq.

264 granted You, my lord,] granted you my Lord. (Q₁ Q₄); granted you, my Lord [lord (Q₅)] (Q₂ Q₃ Q₅ Q₈ Q₇ Ff), granted you. my lord. (Q₈), granted—You, my lord, (Thirby conj., Theobald)

265 employ'd (F₂ F₄)] employed (Q₁); employed (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), employed (Q₅₋₈); employ'd (F₁ F₃).

293, 294 course. When] course When (Qq F₁ F₂ F₃); course, When (F₁).

294 suddenly, (Q₁ F₄)] suddenly (Q₂₋₈ F₃); sodainly. (F₁); sodainly: (F₂).

ACT II, Scene 1, 82 oneyers] Oneyres (Q₁), Oneyers (Q₂₋₈ Ff), Moneyers (N Hardinge conj., Theobald); owners (Hanmer), mynheers (Capell).
106 *Exeunt.* (Ff)] om Qq

Scene 2 (stage direction)] The Quartos have Poin, Peto, '&c.' enter with the Prince, but the Folios (keeping 'Peto') omit '&c.'

18 Bardolph] This is the regular form in Ff; Qq spell the name 'Bardoll' or 'Bardol'

46 Go (Qq₃₋₈ Ff)] om Q₁ Q₂

112 are (Q₂₋₈ Ff)] are all (Q₁)

Scene 3, 3 respect (Q₆ Q₇ Q₈ Ff)] the respect (Q₁₋₅).

72 A (F₁ F₂)] a (Q₃₋₈ F₃ F₄), om Q₁ Q₂

Scene 4, 37 precedent] present (Qq), President (Ff).

135 sun] sonnes (Q₁ Q₂), sunne or Sunne or Sun (Q₃₋₈ Ff).

192 Prince (F₁ F₂ F₃)] Gad (Qq), Prin. (F₄).

193, 195, 199 Gads.] Ross. (Qq), Gad (Ff)

270 elf-skin] Eel-skin (Hanmer)

434 tristful (Rowe₁)] trustfull (Qq F₁ F₂ F₃); trustful (F₄).

441 yet (Q₃₋₈ Ff)] so (Q₁ Q₂).

497 reverend] reuerent or reverent (Qq); reuerend (F₁); Reverend (F₂ F₃ F₄).

541 mad (F₃ F₄)] made (Qq F₁ F₂).

584 Peto. (Ff)] om. Qq.

589 Prince (Ff)] om. Qq

ACT III, Scene 1, 17 Shak'd (Q₅₋₈ Ff), Shaked (Q₁₋₄).

70 here's (F₃ F₄)] here is (Qq), heere's (F₁ F₂).

100 cantle] scantle (Qq), Cantle (Ff).

116 I will (Pope)] Ile or I'll (Qq Ff)

194 she will (Pope)] sheele or shee'le or she'll (Qq Ff).

232 marvel, he (Theobald)] maruaile he (Q₁ Q₂), maruell he (Q₃₋₈); maruel hee (Q₇); marvell he (Q₈), maruell he (F₁).

255 ne'er (Steevens conj.; Dyce₂)] neuer or never (Qq Ff).

Scene 2, 59 won (F₄)] wan or wanne (Qq), wonne (F₁ F₂ F₃).

89 desir'd (Ff)] desired (Qq).

Scene 3, 37 that's] that (Q₁ Q₂); thats (Q₃ Q₄); *that's* (Q₅₋₈). Ff om. 'that's God's angel'

- 67 tthe (Theobald, Warburton)] tight (Qq Ff)
 98 sneak-cup (Qs Qs Qs)] sneakeup (Q1 Q2); sneake-cup (Q4 Q7);
 sneak-cap (Qs), Sneake-Cuppe (F1)
 101 (stage direction) them (Theobald)] *him* (Qq Ff)
 106 Quickly] quickly (Q1-4), *quickly* (Qs-8); *Quickly* (Ff)
 194, 195 pacified—Still?—] pacified still, (Q1), pacified still· (Q2-8),
 pacified still. (Ff), pacify'd,—still?—(Hanmer)
 220 Pains (Johnson conj)] Peto (Qq Ff)
 223 o'] of (Q1), a (the rest)
 227 they or we (Q4-8)] we or they (Q1 Q2 Qs), they, or we (Ff).

- Act IV, Scene 1, 6 I (Q2-8 Ff)] I do (Q1)
 54, 55 what Is] what us [o' t'is o' 'us] (Q1-7); what's (Qs), what is
 (Ff).
 98 with (Qq Ff)] wing (Rowe1)
 99 Bated] Baited or Bayted (Qq Ff), Baiting (Hanmer).
 108 dropp'd] drop (Q1), dropt (the rest)
 116 altar] altars (Q1 Qs Q4), alter (Q4); Altar (Qs-8 Ff).
 126 cannot (Qs Qs Q7 Ff)] can (Q1-4); can not (Qs).
 127 yet (Qs-8 Ff)] it (Q1-4)

- Scene 2, 2 Co'fil' (Clark and Wright)] cophill or cop-hill (Qq Ff)
 28 old fac'd (Qs Q7 Qs)] olde fazd (Q1 Qs); old fazde (Qs), olde fazde
 (Q4); olde faczde (Qs), old-fac'd (Ff)
 29 them that (Ff)] them as (Qq)
 46 but a (Rowe1)] not a (Qq Ff)
 62 all, to-night (White1)] all [al (Q4)] night (Qq); all to Night (Ff)
 78 on the (Qs-8 Ff)] in the (Q1 Q2)

- Scene 3, 21 horse] horses (Q1-4); Horse (Qs-8 Ff).
 28 ours (Qs Q7 Qs Ff)] our (Q1-5)
 72 heirs as pages, followed] heires, as Pages followed (Q1 Q2 Qs); heirs,
 as pages followed (Q4 Qs), heires, as pages followed (Qs Q7 Qs); Heires,
 [Heirs, (F3)] as Pages followed (F1 F2 F3); Heirs, as Pages, followed (F4)
 82 country's] Countrey (Q1), Countrie (Q2 Qs); Country (Q4), Coun-
 tries (Qs-8 F1 F2), Countreys (F1 F4)
 113 And may be so we shall (Q1)] And may be, so we shall [shal
 (Q4)] (Q2-8), And't may be, so wec [we (Q7 Qs F2 F3 F4)] shall.
 (Q7 Qs Ff).
 113 *Exeunt* (Ff)] om Qq

Act v, Scene 1 (stage direction)] The Quartos and Folios include the Earl of Westmoreland, om Hanmer

25 I do (Ff)] I (Qq).

56 woo'd (Ff)] wooed (Qq)

83 our (Ff)] your (Qq)

134 After 'word honour' the first four Quartos insert 'what is that honour [or honor]?' The other Quartos and the Folios omit it.

137 will it (Q₂₋₈ F₂ F₃ F₄)] wil (Q₁), wil it (F₁).

Scene 2, 3 undone (Q₃ F₂ F₃ F₄)] vnder one (Q₁₋₄); vndone (Q₅ Q₆ Q₇ F₁).

8 Suspicion (Rowe)] Supposition (Qq Ff), Suppose then, (Rowe).

10 ne'er] neuer (Q₁₋₇), never (Q₈), ne're (Ff)

51 show'd] shewed (Q₁ Q₃ Q₈), shew'd or shew'd (Q₂₋₇ Ff).

71 Upon (Pope)] On (Qq Ff)

72 a libertine (Capell)] a libertue (Q₁₋₄); at libertue (Q₅), at liberty (Q₆ Q₇ Q₈); at Liberty (Ff).

95, 96 withall In (Capell)] withall In (Q₁); withall, In (Q₂₋₈ Ff).

96 day. (Q₂ Q₃ Q₅ Q₆ Q₇ Q₈ Ff)] day, (Q₁); day' (Q₄).

Scene 3 The Folios mark no new scene.

1 the (Hanmer)] om Qq Ff.

22 A fool go (Capell)] Ah foole, goe [go (Q₃ Q₈)] (Qq), Ah foole. go (F₁ F₂ F₃); Ah fool: go (F₄).

41 stand'st] stands (Q₁); standst or stand'st (the rest).

51 get'st (F₄)] gets (Q₁); getst (Q₂₋₈ F₁ F₂ F₃)

Scene 4 *Scena Tertia* (Ff).

5 do (Pope)] om. Qq Ff.

34 thee. So] thee and (Q₁), thee, and (Q₂₋₆); thee and (Q₇ Q₈), thee. so (Ff).

68 Nor (Q₈ Ff)] Now (Q₁₋₇).

81 But . . . fool,] But thoughts the slaues of life, and life times foole, (Q₁), But thought's the slaue of life, and life times foole, (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ Q₆); But thought's the slaue of life, and life times foole; (Q₅); But thought's toe slaue [slave (Q₈)] of life, and life, times foole, (Q₇ Q₈); But thought's the slaue [slave (F₁)] of Life, and Life, Times foole, (F₁ F₂), But thought's the slave of Life, and Life Times foole [Fool (F₄)] (F₃ F₄).

92 thee (Q₇ Q₈ F₄)] the (the rest).

100 ignominy (Q₁ Q₂ Q₃ Q₈ F₁ F₂)] ignomy (Q₄₋₇ F₃ F₄).

163 ours (Q₂₋₈ Ff)] our (Q₁)

164 let's (Q₇ Q₈ Ff)] let vs (Q₁ Q₂ Q₃); lets (Q₄ Q₅ Q₆).

Scene 5 *Scena Quarta*. (F₁); *Scena Quinta*. (F₂); *Scena Quarta*. (F₃ F₄).

29 valour (Q₄ Q₆ Q₇ Q₈)] valours (Q₁ Q₂ Q₃); valoure (Q₅); Valour (Ff).

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 zounds, ²Sounds, by God's wounds, 1, 2, 112, 1, 3, 131, u, 1, 88, u, 2, 68; u, 4, 159, 261, iv, 1, 17, v, 4, 119

TEXTUAL NOTES

[Qq indicates the exact agreement of four Quartos—Q₂ (1599), Q₄ (1609), Q₄ (undated), and Q₈ (1637). Q₂ without mention of the others indicates the agreement of the same four except in some detail of spelling. Q₄ (1597) is occasionally cited Ff indicates the exact agreement of all four Folios—F₁ (1623), F₂ (1632), F₃ (1664), and F₄ (1685). F₁ without mention of the others indicates agreement of the four except in some detail of spelling. The figures 1 and 2 after an editor's name indicate first and second edition. Conjectures are marked 'conj'; omissions, 'om']

- ACT 1, Prologue, 1-14 omitted in Ff
 Scene 1, 27 *cruell*] *ciul* (Q₂), *ciull* (Q₃ F₁); *cruell* (Q₄ Q₈).
 32 in (Q₁ Q₄ Q₈ F₂ F₃ F₄)] om Q₂ Q₃ F₁.
 37 two (Q₁)] om. Qq Ff.
 69 *swashing* (Q₄ Q₈)] *washing* (Q₂ Q₃ Ff).
 79 (stage direction)] *Fight* (Ff), om. Qq
 81 *Citizens*] om. Qq Ff, Clark and Wright conj
 99 Verona's] *Neronas* (Q₂), corrected in Q₈.
 127 *draue* (Q₈ F₂ F₃ F₄)] *driue* (Q₂); *draue* (Q₃ Q₄ F₁).
 129 the city's] the *Citties* (Q₁), this *Citie* (Q₂); this *City* (Q₃ Q₄ Q₈ Ff).
 148 portentous (F₂ F₃ F₄)] portendous (Q₂ Q₃ Q₈ F₁); protendous (Q₄);
 portentous (Q₁)
 154 his (Q₃ Q₄ Q₈ Ff)] is (Q₂)
 160 sun (Pope₂; Theobald)] same (Qq Ff).
 184 create (Q₁ F₂ F₃ F₄)] created (Qq F₁)
 186 well-seeming (F₃ F₄)] welseeing (Q₂ F₁), wellseeing (Q₂);
 welseeming (Q₄ F₂), well seeming (Q₈)
 197 rais'd] *raisde* (Q₁), made (Qq Ff).
 199 lovers'] a *louers* (Q₁), *louing* (Q₃ F₁)
 209 Bid . . . will] Bid a sickman in sadnes make his will (Q₁), Bid a
 sicke man in sadnesse make his will (Q₄ Q₈), A sicke man in sadnesse
 makes his will (Q₂ Q₃ F₁), A sicke [sick (F₃ F₄)] man in good sadnesse
 [sadness (F₂ F₄)] makes his will (F₂ F₃ F₄).
 210 Ah (Q₁)] A (Qq F₁), O (F₂ F₃ F₄)
 218 unharm'd] *vnharm'd* (Q₁), *vncharmd* (Q₃ Q₈ Q₄), *vncharm'd* (F₁);
 uncharm'd (Q₆ F₂ F₃ F₄)
 225 makes (Q₄ Q₈ F₂ F₃ F₄)] make (Q₂ Q₃ F₁).

Scene 2, 14 The earth hath (Q₄ Q₈)] Earth hath (Q₂ Q₃ F₁), Earth.^{pp}
 hath (F₂ F₃ F₄)

- 18 agree (Q₃ Q₄ Q₈ Ff)] agreed (Q₂).
 29 female (Q₁)] *fennell* (Q₂ Q₃); *Fennell* (Q₄ Q₈ F₁); *Female* (F₂ F₃ F₄).
 32 Which . . . one] Which one more view [*veiw* (Q₃)], of many, mine
 being one, (Q₂ Q₃ Ff); Which on more view of many, mine being one,
 (Q₄ Q₈).

38 written here? It] written. Here it (Qq F₃ F₄), written. Heere it (F₁); written Heert it (F₂).

68 Anselmo (Capell conj, Dyce₂)] Anselme (Q₁ Qq F₁ F₂), Anselm (F₃ F₄).

69 Vitruvius (F₃ F₄)] Vtruuius (Q₁ Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ F₁); Utruvio (Q₅); Vtruuius (F₁)

72 and (Q₁)] om Qq Ff.

77, 78 Ro Whither to supper? Ser To (Q₂), Whither to supper? Ser? To (Q₃), Ro Whither to supper. Ser To (Q₄), Rom Whither? to supper? Ser. To (Q₅ F₁) Corrected by Theobald (Warburton)

85 Exit (Ff)] om Qq

87 lov'st] loues (Q₁ Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ F₁), lovest (Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)

93 fires (Pope)] fier (Q₂ Q₃), fire (Q₄ Q₅ F₁ F₂ F₃); Fire (F₄)

103 seems] seemes (Q₁ Q₂), shewes (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ F₁ F₂), shews (F₃ F₄).

Scene 3, 14 She is (Steevens 1793)] shee's (Q₁ Q₅ F₁), shees (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ F₂); she's (F₃ F₄)

17 shall (Q₂ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] stal (Q₂).

36 high-lone] high lone (Q₁), hylone (Q₂); a lone (Q₃), alone (Q₄ Q₅ Ff).

43 holidam (Q₅)] holydam (Q₂ Q₃); holy dam (Q₄); holy-dam (F₁ F₂ F₃), Holy-dam (F₄)

52 it brow (Qq F₁ F₂)] its brow (F₃), its Brow (F₄)

65 disposition (Ff)] dispositions (Qq)

66 honour (Pope)] honor (Q₁), houre (Qq F₁)

71 mothers. By my count, I] mothers by my count. I (Q₂ Q₃), mothers by my count, I (Q₄), mothers by my count I (Q₅); Mothers By my count I (F₁), Mothers. By my count, I (F₂ F₃ F₄)

99 make it (Q₁ Q₄ Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)] make (Q₂ Q₃ F₁)

Scene 4, 7, 8 Nor . . . entrance (Pope from Q₁)] om. Qq Ff

23 Mer. (Q₅)] Horatio (Q₂ Q₃), Mercu. (Q₄), Hora (Ff)

31 quote (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] coate (Q₁), cote (Q₂).

39 done (Q₁ F₁ F₂ F₃)] dum (Q₂); dun (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅); Dun (F₄)

42 Of this sir-reverence love] Of this surreuerence loue (Q₁), Or saue you reuerence loue (Q₂), Or [Or, (F₄)] saue [save (F₂ F₃ F₄)] your reuerence [reverence (F₂ F₃); reverence, (F₄)] loue [love (F₂ F₃), Love (F₄)] (Ff).

45 We . . . day (Capell)] We burne our lights by night, like Lampes by day (Q₁), We waste [wast (Q₃)] our lights in vaine, lights lights by day (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄); We waste our lights in vaine, Lights Lights by day (Q₄), We wast our lights in vaine, lights, lights, by day (F₁)

47 five (Wilbraham conj, Malone)] fine (Qq Ff).

57 atomies (Q₂ Q₄ Q₅)] Atomī (Q₁), ortamie (Q₂), Atomies (Ff).

58 Athwart] A thwart (Q₁), ouer (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ F₁), over (Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄).

61 spider's] spider (Q₂ Q₃), Spider (Q₄); spiders (Q₅), Spiders (Ff).

- 63 film] filmes (Q₁), Philome (Qq F₁), filme (F₂ F₃ F₄)
 66 maid] maide (Q₁), man (Qq F₁); woman (F₂ F₃), Woman (F₄).
 72 O'er] O're (Q₁), On [on (Q₅)] (Qq Ff).
 76 breaths (Rowe)] breathes (Q₁); breath (Qq F₁)
 81 dreams he] dreames he (Q₁), he dreams (Q₂ Q₃ F₂ F₃ F₄), he dreames (Q₄ Q₅ F₁)
 90 elflocks] Elfelocks (Q₁), Elklocks (Q₂ Q₃ F₁), Elflocks (Q₄ F₂ F₃ F₄), Elflockes (Q₅).
 103 face (Q₁)] side (Qq Ff).
 113 sail] saile (Q₁), sute (Qq Ff).

 Scene 5, 19 have a bout] haue about (Q₁), walke about (Qq F₁)
 20 Ah ha, my] ah ha my (Q₁), Ah my (Qq F₁), Ah me (F₂ F₃ F₄)
 28 (stage direction)] After l 27 in Qq Ff.
 48 Like (Q₁ F₂ F₃ F₄)] As (Qq F₁)
 96 fine (Warburton conj., Theobald)] sinne or sin (Qq Ff)
 97 ready (Q₁ Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)] did readie (Q₂ Q₄), did ready (Q₃ F₁).
 134 there (Q₁)] here (Qq Ff)
 144 this . . . this (Ff)] tis . . . tis (Qq)

Act II, Prologue, 4 match'd (F₄)] match (Q₂), matcht (Q₃ Q₁ Q₅ F₁ F₂ F₃)

Scene 1, 6 Nay, . . . too] continued to Benvolio in Q₂ Q₃ Ff, given to Mercutio in Q₁ Q₄ Q₅

9 one rhyme] one rime (Q₁ Q₃ Q₄ F₁); on rime (Q₂), one ryme (Q₅), one time (F₂ F₃ F₄)

10 pronounce] Pronounce (Q₁), pronounce (Q₄ Q₅), prouaunt, (Q₂ Q₃), Prouant, (F₁); Couply (F₂ F₃ F₄).

10 dove] Doue (Q₁), day (Q₂ Q₃ F₁ F₂ F₃), die (Q₄); dye (Q₅), Day (F₄)

12 heir] heire (Q₁ Q₄ Q₅), her (Q₂ Q₃ Ff).

13 Adam Cupid] (Upton conj., Steevens 1778)] *Abraham Cupid* (Q₁ Q₂ Q₃); *Abraham Cupid* (Q₄ Q₅ Ff), auborn Cupid (Theobald conj.), auburn Cupid (Dyce₁); abram Cupid (Dyce conj.)

13 trim (Q₁)] true (Qq Ff)

38 et cetera, thou a] *Et cætera*, thou a (Q₁), or thou a (Q₂ Q₃ Ff), & [and (Q₅)] *catera*, and thou a (Q₄ Q₅).

Scene 2, 16 do (Q₃ Ff)] to (Q₂), doe (Q₄ Q₅).

20 eyes (Q₁)] eye (Qq F₁ F₂ F₃), Eye (F₄).

29 white-upturned] Hyphen supplied by Theobalds.

31 lazy-pacing (Pope)] lasie pacing (Q₁), lazie [lazy (F₂ F₃ F₄)] puffing (Qq Ff).

- 41, 42 nor any name¹ (Malone)] δ (α O) be some other name
 Belonging to a man. (Qq Ff), nor any other part. (Q₁).
 44 name (Q₁) word (Qq Ff)
 45 were (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] were (Q₂).
 48 that (Q₁) thy (Qq Ff).
 59 that (Q₁) thy (Qq Ff)
 59 utterance] vtterance (Q₁), vttering (Q₂ F₁).
 61 saint] Saint (Q₁), maide (Q₂), Maid (Ff)
 61 dislike (Qq Ff)] displease (Q₁)
 69 let (Q₁) stop (Qq Ff)
 75 sight (Q₁) eies (Q₂), eyes (F₁).
 83 vast shore wash'd] vast shore, washt (Q₁); vast shore washeth (Q₂),
 vast shore washet (Q₁), vast shore washt (Q₄ Q₅), vast-shore-washet (F₁),
 vast-shore washd (F₂), vast-shore wash'd (F₃), vast-shore, wash'd (F₄).
 84 would (Q₁) should (Qq Ff)
 99 haviour (F₂ F₁ F₄) haviour (Q₁), behaiour (Q₂); be haviour (Q₃);
 behaviour (F₁ Q₄), behaviour (Q₁).
 101 more cunning (Q₁) coying (Q₂ Q₁ F₁), more coying (Q₄ Q₅), more
 coynng (F₂ F₃ F₄)
 104 true-love] truloue (Q₁), trueloue (Q₁); true loue (Q₄); true loues
 (Q₁); true loves (Q₅); true Loues (F₁)
 107 swear] sweare (Q₁), vow (Qq Ff)
 110 circled (Q₁ Q₁ Q₁ Q₁ Ff)] circle (Q₂)
 136 (stage direction)] *Culs* [*Calls* (F₄)] *within* (Ff), om Qq.
 141 (stage direction)] om Qq F₁, *Enter* (F₂ F₃ F₄).
 153 suit (Q₅) strife (Q₂ Q₁ Ff), sute (Q₄) Broke has 'To cease your
 sute' (fol 16 r^o)
 155 *Exit* (Ff)] om Qq
 163, 164 than mine With] then With (Q₂ Q₁ F₁); then myne With (Q₄);
 than mine, With (Q₅), then with The (F₂ F₃); than with The (F₄).
 164 Romeo's name] *Romeos* name (Q₁); *Romeo* (Qq Ff).
 165 Romeo! *Romeo*? (Q₁), om Qq Ff
 169 dear] Neece (Q₂ Q₃ F₁), Deere (Q₄ Q₅); sweete (F₂), sweet (F₃),
 Sweet (F₄)
 169 At what (Q₁) What (Qq Ff)
 171 years (F₃ F₄) yeare (Q₂); yeares (Q₃ Q₄ F₁ F₂); yeeres (Q₅)
 180 That her (Pope)] That his (Qq Ff); Who . . her (Q₁,
 Capell)
 182 silk] silke (Q₁), silken (Qq Ff).
 182 loving-jealous] Hyphen inserted by Theobald.
 187 *Exit* (Pope)] om. Qq F₁, after l. 188 (F₂ F₃ F₄).
 188 Sleep . . breast] Given to Romeo in Q₁ Q₄ Q₅; to Juliet in the rest.
 189 In Q₂ Q₃ F₁, ll 1-4 of sc 3 are inserted between l. 189 and l. 190
 and are repeated at the beginning of sc 3. Q₄ Q₅ have the right arrange-
 ment F₂ F₃ F₄ follow the arrangement of F₁ through l. 191 but begin the
 Friar's speech with l. 5

190 father's cell] fathers Cell (Q₁), Friars close cell [*or* Cell] (Qq F₂ F₃ F₄), Friars close Cell (F₁)

Scene 3, 2 Check'ring (F₃ F₄)] Checkring (Q₁ Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ F₁ F₂); Checking (Q₂ here, but 'Checkring' above)

3 flecked darkness] flecked darknesse (Q₁), fleckeld darknesse (Q₂ here, but 'darknesse fleckted' above, Q₃ Q₄ Q₅), fleckled darknesse (F₁); darknesse fleckel'd (F₂), darkness fleckel'd (F₃), Darkness fleckel'd (F₄).

4 day's . . . wheels] daies path, and *Titans* fierie wheeles (Q₂); daies path, and *Titans* burning wheeles (Q₂ here, but 'daies pathway, made by *Tytans* wheeles' above), daies [dayes (Q₄ Q₅)] path, and *Titans* burning wheeles (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ F₁), dayes pathway, made by *Titans* wheeles (F₂ F₃); days path-way, made by *Titan's* Wheels (F₄).

8 precious-juiced] Hyphen inserted by Pope

22 sometime's (Capell)] sometimes (Q₁), sometime (Qq Ff)

23 small (Q₁)] weake *or* weak (Qq Ff).

26 slays (F₄)] slaies (Q₁), staies (Q₂), slayes (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ F₁ F₂ F₃)

30 Qq Ff mark the entrance of *Romeo* after l 22; corrected by Pope.

74 ring yet in mine] ring yet in my (Q₁), yet ringing in mine (Q₂); yet ringing in my (Q₃ F₁), yet ring in my (Q₄ F₂ F₃ F₄); yet ring in mine (Q₅)

85 chide not (Q₁)] chide me not (Qq Ff)

85 She whom] she whom (Q₁), her (Qq Ff)

Scene 4, 14 shot (Q₁)] run *or* runne (Qq Ff).

18 *Ben.* (Q₁ Ff)] *Ro* *or* *Rom.* (Qq)

19 I can tell you (Q₁)] om Qq Ff

21, 22 rests me his minum rest, one (Malone)] rests me his minum rest one (Q₁), he rests, his minum rests, one (Q₂); he rests his minum [*minum* (Q₄ Q₅)] rests, one (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅), he rests his minum, one (Ff).

29 fantasticoes (Q₁)] phantacies (Q₂ Q₁ Q₄ F₁ F₂), phantasies (Q. F. F₁).

32 grandsir (Q₁ Q₄)] groundsir (Q₁ Q₂), Grand-sire (Q₃), Grandsire (F₂ F₃), Grandsir (F₄)

35 pardona-mi's] pardonmees (Q₁), pardons mees (Q₂), pardon mees (Q₃), pardona-mees (Q₄ Q₅), pardon mee's (F₁), pardon-mee's (F₂); pardon-me's (F₃ F₄)

37 bones . . . bones (Qq Ff)] *bon's* . . . *bon's* (Theobald)

41 was but (Q₁)] was (Qq Ff)

67 Well said (Q₁)] Sure wit (Qq Ff).

71 wits faint (Q₂)] wits faints (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ F₁), wit faints (F₂ F₃ F₄), wits faile (Q₁).

74 our wits (Qq Ff)] thy wits (Q₁; Capell).

108 *Mer.* (Q₁)] om. Qq Ff

109 *Ben.* (Q₁)] *Mer* (Qq Ff).

113, 114 the fairer face of the two] the fairer face (Qq Ff), the fairer of the two (Q₁).

- 121 made for himself] made for himselfe (Q₁), made, himself (Q₂ F₃);
 made, himselfe (F₁ F₂ Q₃ Q₄ Q₅), made himself (F₄), for himselfe (Q₁).
 135 endite (Qq F₁)] inuite (Q₁), envite (F₂), invite (F₃ F₄)
 140 (stage direction)] *He walks by them, and sings* (Q₁), om Qq Ff.
 152 Marry, farewell'] Marry farewell (Q₁), om Qq Ff
 153 ropery (F₂ F₃)] roperie (Qq F₁), Roguery (F₄), roperipe (Q₁)
 161 skains-mates] skaines mates (Q₁ Qq F₁ F₂), skains mates (F₃);
 skains-Mates (F₄)
 161 After 'skaines mates' Q₁ has *She turnes to Peter her man*
 174 into (Q₁)] in (Qq Ff)
 209 I warrant (F₂ F₃ F₄)] Warrant (Qq F₁)
 226 Peter apace (Clark and Wright)] *Peter*, take my fanne, and goe
 before (Q₁); Before [Before, (F₄)] and apace (Qq Ff).

- Scene 5, 5 glide (F₄)] glides (Qq F₁ F₂ F₃).
 11 Is three (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅)] Is there (Q₂), I three (Ff).
 16 old folks, many feign] old folkes, many faun (Q₂); old folkes, many
 faine (Q₃ Q₄), old folkes many faine (Q₅), old folkes, Many faine (F₁); old
 folks, marry, feign (Johnson), old folks move, i' faith (Dyce con),
 Hudson)
 26 jaunce] iaunce (Q₂ Q₃); iaunt (Q₄ F₁ F₂), jaunt (Q₅ F₃); Jaunt (F₄).
 26 had (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] om Q₂
 53 jauncing] iaunsing (Q₂ Q₃), iaunting (Q₄ F₁ F₂); jaunting (Q₅ F₃ F₄).

- Scene 6, 16, 17 Here . . . flint] See where 'she comes | So light of foote
 nere hurts the troden flower | Of loue and ioy, see see the soueraigne
 power (Q₁).
 18 gossamer] gossamours (Q₂ Q₃); Gossamours (Q₄ Q₅ F₁ F₂ F₃); Gos-
 samour (F₄).
 27 musie's] musicke (Q₂ Q₃); Musickes (Q₄ Q₅ F₃); musickes (F₁ F₂);
 Musicks (F₄)
 37 *Excunt* (F₂ F₃ F₄)] om Qq F₁

- Act III, Scene 1, 2 Capulets] *Capels* (Q₂ Q₃), *Capulets* (Q₄ Q₅ Ff),
Capels are (Q₁).
 37 (stage direction)] *Enter* Tybalt, Petruchio, and others. (Q₂ F₁).
 38 come (Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)] comes (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ F₁).
 55 And (Capell)] Or (Qq Ff)
 77 Alla stoccata (Knight)] *Alla stucatho* (Qq F₁), *Allastucatho* (F₂ F₃
 F₄).
 93 *with his Followers*] supplied by Clark and Wright
 94 o' both your (Dyce)] on your (Q₁), a both (Qq), a both the (F₁),
 of both the (F₂ F₃ F₄)
 113 soundly too Your houses!] soundly, to your houses. (Q₂), soundly,

to your houses (Q₃), soundly to your houses— (Q₄ Q₅); soundly to your Houses (F₁); soundly too [too, (F₃ F₄)] your Houses. (F₂ F₃ F₄)

118 kinsman (Q₁) Cozen (Q₂ F₃ F₄), Cozin (Q₃ Q₄ F₁ F₂); cousin (Q₅).

125 (stage direction)] om Qq

127 Alive in triumph, and] A hue in tryumph and (Q₁), He gan in triumph and (Q₂), He gon in triumph and (Q₃ Q₄), He gone in triumph [Triumph (F₄)], and (Q₅ F₃ F₄), He gon in triumph, and (F₁ F₂)

129 fire-ey'd] fier eyed (Q₁), fier end (Q₂), fier and (Q₃), fire and (Q₄ F₁ F₂), fire, [Fire, (F₄)] and (F₃ F₄).

145 and others] and all (Qq Ff).

152 O Prince! O husband!] O Prince, O Cozen, husband, (Q₂), O Prince, O Cozin, Husband, (F₁), O prince!—O husband! (Capell).

171 agile] agill (Q₁ Q₄ Q₅), aged (Q₃ Q₃ F₁), able (F₂ F₃ F₄)

188 owe? (Q₅) owe (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ Ff)

189 Mon] Capu (Q₂), Cap. (Q₃ Ff); Moun (Q₄); Mou. (Q₅)

193 hate's (Knight)] hates (Q₁), hearts (Qq Ff), hates' (Capell).

197 I will (Q₁ Q₄ Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄) It will, (Q₂ Q₃ F₁)

Scene 2, 6 runaway] runnawayes (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), run-awayes (F₁ Q₅), run-awaies (F₂ F₃), run-aways (F₄), run-away (Blackstone conj), runagate's (Becket conj²), rumourers' (Singer₂), run-about's (Knightley), rude day's (Dyce)

9 By (Q₄ Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄) And by (Q₂ Q₃ F₁).

15 grown (Rowe)] grow (Qq Ff)

21 he (Q₅) I (Q₂ Q₃ Ff), hee (Q₄)

37 weraday (Q₂) weladay (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄), welady (F₁ F₂).

47 death-darting (F₁ Q₃ Q₄ Q₅) death arting (Q₂).

49 shut (Capell)] shot (Qq Ff)

49 make thee (Johnson conj, Steevens 1778)] makes thee (Qq F₁); makes the (F₂ F₃ F₄).

51 of (Ff Q₅) om Q₂ Q₃ Q₄

56 swounded (Q₁) sounded (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ F₁ F₂ F₃), swouned (Q₅); swooned (F₄)

66 dear-lov'd (Pope)] deare loude (Q₁); dearest (Qq Ff)

71 Qq F₁ F₄ give the whole line to Juliet, F₂ F₃ give 'O God!' to Juliet and 'Did . . . blood' to the Nurse.

72 It did . . . it did!] Given to the Nurse in Q₁ Q₃ F₂ F₃ F₄; continued to Juliet in Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ F₁

73 O serpent . . . face] Given to Juliet in Q₁ Q₃ F₂ F₃ F₄, to the Nurse in Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ F₁.

76 Dove-feather'd raven (Theobald)] Rauenous doufeatherd rauē (Q₂); Rauenous doufeatherd Rauen (Q₃), Rauenous doue, featherd Rauen

²*Shakespeare's Himself Again*, 1815, p. 214. Becket prints 'runagate's,' but explains the word as a plural: 'the eyes of runagates, rebels, or love-apostates.'

(Q₄), Ravenous dove, feathred raven (Q₅), Rauenous Doue-feather'd Rauen (F₁), Ravenous Dove, feather'd Raven (F₁ F₃ F₄)

79 damned (Q₄ Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)] dimme (Q₂ Q₁), dimne (F₁)

135 maiden-widowed] Hyphen inserted by Rowe

Scene 3, 1 (stage direction)] *Enter Friar* (Q₁) All the rest make Romeo enter here with the Friar

3 (stage direction)] *Enter Romeo* (Q₁), om. Qq Ff

15 Hence (Q₁)] Here (Qq Ff)

20 banishment (Hammer)] banished (Qq Ff)

21 banishment (Q₁)] banished (Qq Ff)

39-44 Qq arrange thus. 39, 41, 43, 40, 41, 42, 44 Ff arrange thus: 39, 41, 43, 40, 44 (omitting 1 42).

52 Thou (Q₄ Q₅)] Then (Q₂ Q₃ F₁), om. F₂ F₃ F₄

52 a little (Qq)] om. Ff. Q₁ reads 'Thou fond mad man, heare me but speake a word'

61 madmen] mad man (Q₂), mad men (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅), Mad men (F₁)

70 (stage direction)] *Enter Nurse, and knocke* (Q₂); *Enter Nurse, and knockes* (Q₁ F₁ F₂), *Enter Nurse and knockes* (F₃ F₄); *Nurse knockes* [knockes (Q₅)] (Q₄ Q₅).

73 Knock (F₂ F₃ F₄)] *They knocke* (Q₂ Q₃); *Knocke* (Q₁ Q₅ F₁)

75 Knock (F₃ F₄)] *Slud knock* (Q₂); *Slud knocke* (Q₃), *Knocke againe* (Q₄ Q₅); *Knocke* (F₁ F₂).

80 *Enter Nurse* (Rowe)] after l. 78 in Qq Ff

82 Where is (Q₁)] Wheres (Q₂ F₁)

85, 86 O . . . predicament] Part of the Nurse's speech in Qq Ff Corrected by Farmer

91 rises] *He rises* (Q₁); om. Qq Ff.

92 Well (Malone)] Wel (Q₁); om. Qq Ff

108 (stage direction)] *He offers to stab himselfe, and Nurse snatches the dagger away.* (Q₁); om. Qq Ff

110 deuote (Q₁ Q₄ Q₅ F₁)] deuote (Q₂ Q₃), do [doe (F₂)] note (F₃ F₄).

113 Or (Q₁)] And (Qq Ff)

117 liues (F₄)] lies or lyes (Qq F₁ F₂ F₃). Q₁ reads 'Lady too, that liues in thee?'

138 too (Q₁ F₂ F₃ F₄)] om. Qq F₁

141 light (Q₂ Q₃ Q₅ Ff)] lights (Q₁ Q₄).

143 misbehav'd and (Q₅)] misbehaude and (Q₁), mishaued and (Q₂ Q₃), misbehau'd and (Q₄), mishaped and (F₁), mis-shaped and a (F₂ F₃); mis-shapen and a (F₄)

144 pout'st upon] puts vp (Q₂ Q₃); powts vpon (Q₄), poutst upon (Q₅); puttest vp (F₁)

163 is (Q₁)] sir (Qq F₁ F₂ F₃), Sir (F₄)

164 Exit] *Exit Nurse* (Q₁ after l 165), om. Qq Ff

168 disguis'd (Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] disguise (Q₂); disguisd (Q)

Scene 4, 8 no time (Q₁)] no times (Qq Ff)

13 be (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] me (Q₂)

20 A . . . a (Qq F₁ F₂ F₃)] A A (F₄), On o' (Theobald);
O' . . . o' (Capell).

23 We'll] Well, (Q₂); Weele (Q₃ Q₄ F₁), Wee'll (Q₅)

30 A] a (Qq Ff), o' (Capell)

34 very very late (Q₁)] very late (Qq), late (Ff)

Scene 5 (stage direction) aloft, at the window] *at the window* (Q₁),
aloft (Qq Ff).

13 exhales (Q₁ Q₃ Q₄ Ff)] exhale (Q₂ Q₅)

31 chang'd (Rowe)] change (Qq Ff).

36 (stage direction) (Rowe₂)] *Enter Madame and Nurse* (Q₁), *Enter*
Madam and Nurse (Ff)

42 *He goeth down*] *He goeth downe*. (Q₁); om. Qq Ff.

43 my lord, my love, my friend] my Lord, my Loue, my Frend (Q₁),
loue, Lord, ay husband, friend (Q₂), Loue, Lord, ay Husband, Friend (F₁),
Love, Lord, ah Husband, Friend [friend (F₂)] (F₂ F₃ F₄).

53 our time (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] our times (Q₂); the time (Q₁).

54-57 Given to Romeo in Q₂ Q₃; to Juliet in Q₁ and the rest.

55 thee, . below] thee . below (Q₁), thee now, thou art so lowe
(Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ F₁ F₂), thee now thou art so low (Q₅), thee now, thou art so
low (F₁ F₂)

62 renown'd (Q₄)] renown'd (Q₂ Q₃); renown'd (Q₅ Ff).

68 (stage direction)] after 'back' (l 64) in Qq Ff; corrected by Capell.

83 hum (Q₄ Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)] om Q₂ Q₃ F₁.

95, 96 hum—dead—Is (Theobald)] him Dead Is (Qq Ff).

102 Tybalt] om. Qq F₁; *Tybalt* (F₂ F₃ F₄).

107 I (Q₄ Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)] om. Q₂ Q₃ F₁.

127 air] Ayre (Q₄), aire (Q₅); earth (Q₂ Q₃ F₁)

132 Thou counterfeit'st] Thou countefeits (Q₂), Thou counterfeit's (Q₃
F₁), Thou counterfeit's (Q₄ F₂), Thou counterfeit'st (Q₅), Thy counterfeit's
(F₃), Thy Counterfeit's (F₄).

140 gives you (Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)] giue you (Q₂), giues you (Q₃ Q₄ F₁).

146 bridegroom] Bride (Q₂); Bridegroom (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ F₁).

150 How . . . choplogic?] How, how, howhow, chopt lodgick, (Q₂);
How now, how now, chopt lodgick, (Q₃ Q₄); How now? how now? chopt
logick? (Q₅), How now? How now? Chopt Logicke? (F₁ F₂); How now?
How now? Chopt Logick (F₃ F₄), Whats here, chop logicke. (Q₁) Cor-
rected by Steevens

152 And . . . you] om. Ff

162 a (Qq Ff)] o' (Theobald)

173 Q₃ gives to the Nurse 'Father, ô Godigeden' So Q₂. Q₄ Q₅ make
the necessary correction F₁ follows Q₃, as usual The other Folios omit
'Father' but give the rest of the line to the Nurse Q₁ is correct: 'Cap.
Oh goddegodden'

177-179 Day . . hath been (Pope)] Day, night, early, late, at home, abroad, | Alone, in company, waking or sleeping, | Still my care hath bene (Q₁), Day, night, houre, tide, time, worke, play, | Alone in companie, still my care hath bene (Q₂) The other Quartos and the Folios follow Q₂

181 princely] Princely (Q₁), noble or Noble (Qq Ff).

182 train'd] trainde (Q₁), hand (Q₂), allied (Q₃ Q₄); all'd (Q₅); Allied (Ff)

228 thou this (Q₁)] thou (Qq Ff).

236 *Exit* (Q₄ Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)] om. Q₂ Q₃ F₁; *She looks after Nurse* (Q₁).

Act iv, Scene 1, 7 talk'd] talke (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ F₁ F₂); talkt (Q₅); talk (F₃ F₄).

10 do (Q₂)] doth (Q₁ Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ F₁ F₂); should (F₃ F₄).

45 cure (Q₁ Q₅)] care (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ Ff).

46 Ah (Q₁)] O (Qq Ff)

72 slay (Q₁ Q₄ Q₅ F₃ F₄)] stay (Q₂ Q₃ F₁), lay (F₂).

78 yonder (Q₁)] any (Qq Ff)

81 shut (Q₁)] hide (Qq Ff)

83 chapless (F₃ F₄)] chaples (Q₁); chapels (Q₂), chappels (Q₃ F₁); chaplesse (Q₄ Q₅), chapplesse (F₂)

85 shroud (Q₄ Q₅)] om Q₂ Q₃, graue (F₁).

92 the (Q₂)] thy (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff).

94 distilled (Q₁)] distilling (Qq Ff).

100 To paly (Q₅)] Too many (Q₂ Q₃), Too paly (Q₄); To many (F₁); To mealy (F₂ F₃ F₄)

105 forty (Q₃ Q₅ Ff)] fortie (Q₁ Q₂ Q₄); fifty (Maginn conj.), thirty (Marsh conj.)

110 After l 110 Q₂ inserts 'Be borne to buriall in thy kindreds graue.' Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff also have this line. Hammer omitted it

115, 116 and he . . . waking (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅)] an he . . . walking (Q₂); om Ff.

Scene 2, 9 (stage direction)] *Exit Seruingman* (Q₁), om Qq Ff.

26 becomed (Ff)] becomd (Q₂ Q₃), becommed (Q₄ Q₅)

45 hum up (F₂ F₃ F₄)] vp him (Q₂), hum vp (F₁).

Scene 3, 16 life (Qq); fire or Fire (Ff).

30 Supplied by Steevens from Q₁; line omitted in Qq Ff

50 O . . . wake (Hammer)] O . . . walke (Q₂ Q₃ F₁), Or . . . wake (Q₄ Q₅), Or . . . walke (F₂), Or . . . walk (F₃ F₄)

59 Romeo . . . thee] *Romeo* I come, thus doe I drinke to thee (Q₁), *Romeo, Romeo, Romeo*, heeres drinke, I drinke to thee (Q₂—and so substantially Qq Ff with various punctuation).

59 (stage direction)] *She fells upon her bed within the Curtaines* (Q₁), om. Qq Ff

Scene 4, 6-8 Go . . . watching] Qq Ff give this to the Nurse Singer and some others assign it to Lady Capulet, following a conjecture of Z. Jackson's (*Shakespeare's Genius Justified*, 1819, p 424) Q₁ supports Qq Ff.

13 jealous hood (Q₅ F₂ F₃)] jealous hood (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ F₁), jealous-hood (F₄).

13 (stage direction)] after 'there' (l 14) in Qq Ff

21 faith (Q₄ Q₅)] father (Q₂ Q₃), Father (F₁); Faith (F₂ F₄ F₅).

23 (stage direction)] after 'day' in Qq Ff

28 *Exeunt* (Capell)] om Qq Ff

Scene 5, 1 Enter *Nurse* (Hammer)] om Qq Ff.

9 needs must (Q₂)] must needs (the rest)

15 weraday] wereaday (Q₂), weladay (Q₂); weladay (Q₄ Q₅ F₁ F₂ F₃); wel-a-day (F₄)

16 (stage direction) (Q₁ F₄)] om Qq; after 'here' (F₁ F₂ F₃)

32 *with Musicians* (Q₅)] *with the Musicians* (Q₄), om Q₂ Q₃ Ff.

36 See, there (F₄)] there (Qq F₁); see here (F₂ F₃).

41 long (Q₂ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] loue (Q₂).

51 behold (Q₂ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] bedold (Q₂)

65 Confusion's cure] confusions care (Q₂), confusions, care (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅), confusions Care (F₁ F₂ F₃), Confusions Care (F₄); Confusion's Cure (Theobald)

81 In all (Q₁)] And in (Qq Ff).

82 fond (F₂ F₃ F₄)] some (Qq F₁).

95 (stage direction)] *Exeunt manet.* (Q₂), *Exeunt manet* (Q₃), *Exeunt manent Musici.* (Q₄), *Exeunt Manent Musici.* (Q₅), *Exeunt* (Ff)

101 (stage direction)] *Exit omnes Enter Will Kemp.* (Q₁), *Exeunt omnes. Enter Will Kempe* (Q₂), *Exeunt omnes. Enter Peter* (Q₄ Q₅); *Enter Peter* [Peter (F₁)] (Ff).

107 of woe (Q₄ Q₅)] om. Q₂ Q₃ Ff.

107 O . . . comfort me] om. Ff.

124 Then . . . wit] given to Peter in Q₄ Q₅; continued to the Musician in Q₂ Q₃ Ff.

128 grief] grieffe (Q₁), griefes (Qq F₁ F₂); griefs (F₃ F₄).

129 And . . . oppress] om. Qq Ff, And dolefull dumps the minde oppresse (Q₄).

135 Pretty! (Pope)] Pretue, (Q₁); Prates, (Q₂); Pratee, (Q₄ Q₅), Pratest, (Q₃ Ff).

139 Pretty too! (Pope)] Prettue too. (Q₁), Prates to, (Q₂); Pratest to, (Q₃ F₁ F₂); Pratee to, (Q₄), Pratee too. (Q₅), Pratest too, (F₃ F₄).

Act v, Scene 1, 11, booted] *booted* (Q₁), om. Qq Ff.

15 How . . . Juliet?] How fares m/ Juliet? (Q₁), How doth my Lady Juliet [Juliet (Q₂ F₃ F₄)]? (Qq Ff).

- 18 Capel's] *Capels* (Qq F₁ F₂ F₃), *Capulet's* (F₄), Capels' (Malone)
 24 c'en (Collier)] in (Q₂), euen or even (the rest) .
 24 defy you (Pope)] denie you (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ F₁); deny you (Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄);
 defie my (Q₁).
 33 (stage direction)] *Exit* after 'lord' (l. 32) (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ Q₅), *Exit Man*
 after 'lord' (Ff).
 38 'a] a (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), he (Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄); om. F₁.
 57 (stage direction)] om. Qq
 70 starveth in (Q₁ F₂ F₃ F₄)] starueth in (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ F₁), stareth in
 (Otway, *Caus Marius*); stare within (Pope).
 76 pay (Q₁ Q₄ Q₅)] pray (Q₂ Q₃ Ff).

Scene 3, with . . . torch] om. Qq Ff Q₁ has 'Enter Countie Paris and his
Page with flowers and sweete water'

3 yond yew tree] this Ew-tree (Q₁); yond young (or yong) Trees (or
 trees) (Qq Ff)

21 (stage direction) *Balthasar* (Q₁), *Peter* (Q₂ Q₃ Ff); *Balthazer his man*
 (Q₄ Q₅)

21 (stage direction) with . . . iron] supplied from Q₁; om. Qq Ff

40, 43 Given to Balthasar in Q₁ Q₄ Q₅, to Peter in Q₂ Q₃ Ff

48 (stage direction)] om. Qq Ff; supplied in Q₁ before l. 45.

68 conjuration (Capell)] conurations (Q₁); commuration (Q₂); com-
 misseration (Q₃ F₁); commiseration (Q₄ Q₅ F₂ F₃), Commiseration (F₄)

70 *They fight* (Q₁)] om. Qq Ff.

71 *Page* (Q₄ Q₅)] om. Q₂ Q₃, *Pet.* (Ff); *Boy* (Q₁)

102 Shall I beleue (Theobald)] I will beleue, Shall I beleue (Q₂ F₁).

107-120 Between l. 107 and 108 Q₂ inserts.

Depart againe, come lyc thou in my arme,
 Heer's to thy health, where ere thou tumblest in.
 • O true Apothecarie!
 Thy drugs are quicke. Thus with a kisse I die.

Then it goes on with ll. 108-120. Q₃ Ff follow the same derangement.
 Corrected in Q₄ Q₅

107 palace (Q₄ Q₅)] pallat (Q₂); pallace (Q₃); Pallace (F₁)

136 unthrift] vnthriftue (Q₂); vnluckie (Q₃ Q₄ F₁); unluckie (F₂); un-
 lucky (Q₅ F₃ F₄).

137 yew (Pope)] yong (Q₂), young (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff).

147 *Juliet rises*] *Juliet rises* (Q₁ before l. 147); om. Qq Ff.

170 rest (Hazlitt)] rust (Qq Ff) Q₁ reads 'Rest in my bosome.'

170 (stage direction)] *She stabs herselfe and falls* (Q₁), *Kils herselfe*
 (F₁), om. Qq

189 (stage direction)] *Enter Capels* (Q₁ Q₂), *Enter Capulet and his*
Wife (Q₄ Q₅ Ff).

190 that they so (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] that is so (Q₂)

- 191 The (Pope)] O the (Qq Ff)
 194 our (Johnson and Heath conj. , Capell)] your (Qq Ff)
 199 slaughter'd (F₃ F₄)] Slaughter (Q₂), Slaughterd (Q₇), slaughtred
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 205 it (Q₂)] is (the rest) Q₁ has 'it is sheathed'
 209 more early (Q₁)] now earling (Q₂); now early (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff).
 232 that (Q₄ Q₅)] thats (Q₃ Q₃), that's (Ff).
 258 awaking (Q₁ Q₄ Q₅ F₁ F₂ F₄)] awakening (Q₂); a waking (F₂).
 268 his (Q₁ Q₂)] the (the rest).
 271 in this (Q₁)] to this (Qq Ff)
 272 Bal. (Q₅)] Balth (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), Boy (Ff)
 299 raise (Q₅ Ff)] raie (Q₂ Q₃), rayse (Q₄).
 301 such (Q₁ Q₂)] that (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff).
 310 *Exeunt omnes* (Ff)] om Qq

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 patience, calmness, iii, 5, 160, calm endurance, v, 3, 221, fortitude and submission, v, 3, 261, (have), be calm, show fortitude, v, 1, 27
 patience, perforce, i, 5, 91
 patient, calm, i, 5, 73, iii, 3, 16
 peevish, childish, silly, iv, 4, 14
 pennyworths, allowances, iv, 5, 4
 pestilence, the plague, v, 2, 10
 pestilent, plaguy, iv, 5, 147
 Petrarch, ii, 4, 41
 Phaeton, iii, 2, 3
 Phoebus, iii, 2, 2
 physic (holy), ii, 3, 52
 pulcher, a sheath, iii, 1, 83
 pin, the centre pin in a target, the bull's-eye, ii, 4, 16
 pink, flower, ii, 4, 61, 62
 pitch, a height, i, 4, 21
 plantain, leaf, i, 2, 52
 plat, to plant, i, 4, 89
 pluck, to pull, ii, 2, 182
 poor John, dried salt cod or hake, i, 1, 37
 pop'rin, a kind of pear, ii, 1, 38
 portly, polite and dignified, i, 5, 68
 post (in), posthaste, v, 3, 273, (took), hired post horses, v, 1, 21

pothecary, apothecary, v, 3, 289
 pox of, plague on, u, 4, 29
 predicament, one's condition, one's situation, u, 3, 86
 presence, a presence chamber, a room of state, v, 3, 86
 present, immediate, instant, iv, 1, 61, v, 1, 51
 presently, instantly, without delay, iv, 1, 54, 95, v, 1, 21
 press, to force one's way, u, 2, 110
 prevail, to avail, u, 3, 60
 price, value, iv, 1, 27
 prick, a point, a dot, u, 4, 119
 prick-song, music written down in notes, u, 4, 21
 pride, splendour, i, 2, 10, (much), a magnificent sight, i, 3, 89
 Prince of Cats, Tybalt, u, 4, 19
 princex, a pert, saucy youngster, i, 5, 88
 privy to, secretly informed of, v, 3, 266
 proceeding, proceedings, actions, u, 1, 193
 procure, to provide for, arrange, u, 2, 145, to bring, u, 5, 68
 prodigious, ill-omened, monstrous, i, 5, 142
 proof, *n*, well-tested armour, i, 1, 217, experience, i, 1, 177
 proof, *adj*, protected, safe, invulnerable, u, 2, 73
 propagate, to increase, i, 1, 194
 proper, handsome, u, 4, 214
 prorogue, to defer, postpone, u, 2, 78, iv, 1, 48
 provision, furnishings and outfit, iv, 2, 38
 provoke, to challenge, v, 3, 70
 puling, *adj*, whining, whimpering, u, 5, 185
 punto reverso, a backhanded thrust, u, 4, 27
 purchase out, to buy immunity for, u, 1, 198
 purge, to clear away, i, 1, 198, to clear, exonerate, v, 3, 226
 purpose (not to the), not worth mentioning, u, 4, 44
 put out, to display, iv, 5, 123
 put up, to sheathe, iv, 5, 127
 quarrel, cause of quarrel, u, 1, 159, (a good), a good cause, u, 4, 168
 Queen Mab, i, 4, 53
 quit, to repay, reward, u, 4, 203
 quote, to note, observe, i, 4, 31
 quoth 'a? said he? u, 4, 124
 R, u, 4, 218, 219
 rage, frenzy, iv, 3, 54
 rash, hasty, ii, 2, 118
 rate, to berate, scold, u, 5, 170

rearward, rearguard, (with a), coming after, u, 2, 121
 Rebeck, a kind of stringed instrument, iv, 5, 136
 réceptacle, iv, 3, 40
 reckoning, reputation, i, 2, 4; estimation, i, 2, 33
 reeky, reeking, iv, 1, 83
 reflex, reflection, u, 5, 20
 renown'd, *adj*, renowned, u, 5, 62
 resign, to give one's self up, u, 2, 59
 respect, to hold in regard, heed, i, 5, 74
 respect (in one), u, 3, 90
 respective, considerate, u, 1, 128
 rest (hath set up his), has firmly resolved, is determined, iv, 5, 6, (set up my everlasting), take up my abode forever, v, 3, 110
 rest (mum), u, 4, 22
 rest you merry, God keep you happy, i, 2, 65, 84
 revenge, vengeance, u, 1, 176
 rband, ribbon, u, 1, 34
 roe (without his), u, 4, 39
 rood, the cross, i, 3, 36
 ropery, u, 4, 154
 rosemary, u, 4, 216, 221, iv, 5, 79
 rote (by), u, 3, 88
 rude, coarse, i, 5, 53, ungoverned, unbridled, u, 3, 28
 runagate, renegade, fugitive, u, 5, 90
 runaway eyes, u, 2, 6
 rush, to thrust violently, u, 3, 26
 rushes, *n pl*, i, 4, 36
 's, shalt, i, 3, 9, is, ii, 3, 22
 sack, to rifle, u, 3, 107
 sadly, seriously, i, 1, 208
 sadness (in), in sober earnest, i, 1, 206
 Saint Francis, u, 3, 65; v, 3, 121
 satisfied, *pp*, informed, u, 5, 37
 scales, *sing*, i, 2, 100
 scape, to escape, avoid, u, 1, 3, iv, 1, 75
 scathe, to injure, harm, i, 5, 86
 scope, limits, i, 2, 18
 scurvy, contemptible, u, 4, 160, 171
 searchers, v, 2, 8
 season, to preserve, u, 3, 72
 second cock, iv, 4, 3
 sense, feeling, i, 1, 32
 senseless, without feeling, i, 4, 36
 sentence, a formal opinion, judgment, u, 3, 79, decree, i, 1, 95
 sententious, the Nurse's word for 'sentences,' u, 4, 221
 serving-creature, a contemptuous term for 'servant,' iv, 5, 117, 118
 set, *pp*, posted, u, 3, 148, 167, estimated, valued, v, 3, 301

- set up his rest (hath), has firmly resolved, is determined, iv, 5, 6
 set up my everlasting rest, take up my abode forever, v, 3, 110
 shall, who shall, iii, 5, 91
 shield. See God shield
 should, was (were) to, i, 2, 75, v, 3, 149
 show, n, appearance, iii, 2, 77
 show, v, to appear, look, i, 2, 103, i, 5, 50
 shrift, confession, i, 1, 166, ii, 4, 192, ii, 5, 68, absolution, ii, 3, 56
 shuts up, brings to a close, iv, 1, 101
 sick, sickly, ii, 2, 8
 siege, i, 1, 219
 simples, medicinal plants, v, 1, 40
 singleness, feebleness, tenuity, ii, 4, 70
 single-sol'd, weak, thun, ii, 4, 70
 singular, unique, ii, 4, 70
 sirrah, i, 2, 34, i, 5, 31, 128, iv, 2, 2, iv, 4, 16, v, 3, 280
 sur-reverence, i, 4, 42
 skains-mates, cutthroat companions, ii, 4, 161
 slack, to retard, check, iv, 1, 3
 slip, a counterfeit coin, ii, 4, 51
 slop, loose breeches, ii, 4, 48
 slow, to retard, iv, 1, 16
 slug-abad, iv, 5, 2
 smatter, to babble, chatter, iii, 5, 172
 so, provided that, ii, 2, 97, if, iii, 5, 18, (please you), if you please, i, 1, 163, iv, 3, 9
 soft, *intery*, i, 1, 202, ii, 2, 1; iii, 4, 18, iii, 5, 142
 so ho, *intery*, ii, 4, 136
 solace, to take comfort, iv, 5, 47
 solemnity, festival, celebration, festal rites, i, 5, 59, 65, iv, 5, 61
 some minute (hour), a minute (an hour) or so, v, 3, 257, 268
 something, *adv*, somewhat, rather, ii, 4, 140
 son, son-in-law, iii, 4, 16
 soon at night, this (coming) night, ii, 5, 78
 soon-speeding, *adv*, quickly efficacious, v, 1, 60
 sort out, to pick out, select, iii, 5, 110
 sound, to plumb, ii, 2, 126
 sounding, investigation, i, 1, 157
 Soundpost, iv, 5, 139
 sped, *p p*, done for, finished, iii, 1, 94
 speed (be my), prosper me, v, 3, 121
 spent, *p p*, used up, ii, 4, 140, 146
 sphere (of a planet), ii, 2, 17
 spinner, a spider, i, 4, 59
 spite of (in), in defiance of, i, 1, 85 Cf i, 5, 64
 spleen, quarrelsome temper, irascibility, iii, 1, 162
 splendour, brilliant beauty, i, 2, 105
 spoke, *p p*, spoken, i, 4, 1, 7, ii, 2, 89, iv, 1, 28
 spring, source, origin, v, 3, 218
 stand, n, standing, i, 5, 52
 stand on, to insist on, ii, 3, 93, ii, 4, 36
 star-cross'd, thwarted by unfavourable stars, ill-fated, Prologue, 6
 startle, to spring up, rise with startling sound, v, 3, 194
 starveth, v, 1, 70
 state, one's condition, iii, 3, 166, iv, 3, 4, high rank, iii, 3, 34, stately array, i, 4, 70, ceremony, festival, iv, 3, 8
 stay, to wait, i, 3, 105, iii, 1, 133, wait for, heed, i, 1, 219, wait patiently for, ii, 5, 36, linger, iii, 1, 141, stop, iv, 3, 58, detain, v, 3, 187, delay, v, 3, 251
 stay dinner, to wait and dine, iv, 5, 149
 stead, to benefit, ii, 3, 54
 still, ever, always, i, 1, 178, 224, ii, 3, 27, iii, 3, 39, iii, 5, 130, 133, 179, v, 3, 106
 stir-waking, ever-wakeful, i, 1, 188
 stunt, to cease, stop, i, 3, 48, 57
 stout, brave, valiant, iii, 1, 174, 178
 straight, *adv*, straightway, immediately, i, 3, 104, i, 4, 72, 73, 74, ii, 5, 73, iv, 4, 22, v, 1, 33, 79; v, 2, 21
 strain, to force, ii, 3, 19, iv, 1, 47, do violence to, ii, 4, 55
 strange, unfamiliar, iii, 2, 15, distant, offish, ii, 2, 101
 stratagems, atrocities, iii, 5, 211
 stricken, *p p*, struck, i, 1, 239
 stumble (*ominous*), v, 3, 122
 substance, reality, iii, 2, 77
 sudden, immediate, iii, 5, 110, 137
 sullen, dismal in sound, iv, 5, 88
 sum, sum total, ii, 6, 34
 supple government, iv, 1, 102
 surcease, to cease, die away, iv, 1, 97
 suspicion (of), 'suspected', v, 3, 222
 swashing blow, a heavy downward stroke, i, 1, 69
 sweet, *adv*, perfumed, v, 3, 14, (my mother), dear, iii, 5, 200
 sweet, *adv*, sweetly, ii, 3, 32
 sweetening, a sweet apple, ii, 4, 83
 swits and spurs, ii, 4, 72
 swoond, to swoon, iii, 2, 56
 sympathy (woful), agreement in sorrow, iii, 3, 85
 tackled stair, a rope ladder, ii, 4, 200
 take, to understand, comprehend, i, 4, 46; ii, 4, 131
 take me with you, let me understand you, iii, 5, 142
 take post, to hire post horses, v, 1, 21
 take the wall, i, 1, 16

- take truce with, to make terms with, to
pacify, *uu*, 1, 162
tall, valiant, *u*, 4, 31
tallow-face, palld creature, *uu*, 5, 158
Tartar's bow, *i*, 4, 5
tassel-gentle, a male falcon, *u*, 2, 160
teen, sorrow, *i*, 3, 13
temper, *n*, temperament, disposition, *uu*,
1, 120
temper, *v*, to mix, compound, *uu*, 5, 98,
mingle, *u*, Prologue, 14
temper'd, *p.p.*, composed, *uu*, 3, 115
tender, *n*, an offer, *uu*, 5, 186, (make a
desperate), take the whole risk of mak-
ing an offer, *uu*, 4, 12
tender, *v*, to hold, value, *uu*, 1, 74
term, limit of time, *i*, 4, 109; *pl*, words,
1, 1, 219
tetchy, irritable, *i*, 3, 32
that, what, *uu*, 3, 64; she whom, *i*, 1, 206
that, so that, *uu*, 4, 221, *uu*, 5, 99, *v*, 1,
62; *if*, *u*, 6, 25
thee, thyself, *i*, 5, 67, *uu*, 3, 135
them, themselves, *u*, 3, 27
there (*emphatic*), in that respect, *uu*, 3,
137; (with you), *u*, 4, 77
therewithal, with this, *v*, 3, 289
thievish, infested with robbers, *iv*, 1, 79
Thisbe, *u*, 4, 44
though, even if, *ii*, 2, 39
thought long, looked forward with impa-
tient longing, *iv*, 5, 41
thou's, thou shalt, *i*, 3, 9
thumb *See* bite thumb
tilt, to thrust, *uu*, 1, 163
time, life, *iv*, 1, 60
timeless, untimely, *v*, 3, 162
Titan, the sun god, *ii*, 3, 4
tithe-pig, *i*, 4, 79
to, in accord with, *ii*, 4, 47, in compari-
son with, *ii*, 4, 41; so as to, *i*, 1, 194,
iv, 1, 3; *v*, 3, 81
to blame, blameworthy, *uu*, 5, 170
to do (much), a great disturbance, *i*, 1, 182
to-night, last night, *i*, 4, 50, *u*, 4, 2
took, *p.p.*, taken, *i*, 5, 110, *ii*, 4, 131
tool, sword, *i*, 1, 37
topgallant, the very summit, *u*, 4, 201
towards, in preparation, coming, *i*, 5, 124
toy, a whim, fancy, *iv*, 1, 119
traffic, business, Prologue, 12
transparent, bright and transparent, *i*, 2,
95
trencher, a wooden plate or platter, *i*, 5, 2
true, *adv*, accurately, *ii*, 1, 13
triumphant, magnificent, *v*, 3, 83
trow, to believe, think, *i*, 3, 33, *ii*, 5, 64
truckle-bed, trundle-bed, *u*, 1, 39
rue, *adv*, truly, truthfully, *uu*, 1, 182
rue birth, *ii*, 3, 20
true-love, *adv*, *u*, 2, 104
try, to prove by experience, *iv*, 3, 29
twain, *adv*, separate, *uu*, 5, 242
two hours' traffic, Prologue, 12
Tybalt, *u*, 4, 17, 18
tyrant, a savage, a ruffian, *i*, 1, 26, *iii*,
2, 75
unadvis'd, unconsidered, *u*, 2, 118
unattainted, clear, *i*, 2, 89
unbruised, unscathed, *u*, 3, 37
uncomfortable, discomfoting, distressful,
iv, 5, 60
uncovered, with the face bare, *iv*, 1, 110
undone, ruined, *uu*, 2, 38
uneven, full of obstacles, *iv*, 1, 5
unkind, *v*, 3, 145
unmann'd, untamed, *uu*, 2, 14
unstuff'd, not clogged with cares, *u*, 3, 37
unthrifty, unfortunate, *v*, 3, 136
up, *adv*, completely, *iv*, 2, 45, *adv*,
roused up, in arms, *uu*, 1, 138, *interj*,
come along, *uu*, 1, 144
up and down, in all directions, about, *u*,
4, 95
urge, to mention, speak of, *i*, 1, 210, *i*, 5,
111, *uu*, 1, 159
use, to be accustomed, *u*, Prologue, 10
usurer, *uu*, 3, 123
utter, to sell, dispense, *v*, 1, 67
vainly, uselessly, to no purpose, *v*, 3, 125
validity, value, dignity, worth, *uu*, 3, 33
vanish, to issue, be emitted, *uu*, 3, 10
vanity, emptiness, frivolity, *i*, 1, 185,
triviality, *u*, 6, 20
vaulty, vaulted, *uu*, 5, 22
versal world, the universe, *u*, 4, 216
vice, fault, *ii*, 3, 22
view, appearance, *i*, 1, 176
vile, worthless, *u*, 3, 17, *uu*, 2, 59
villain, a low fellow, *uu*, 1, 64, 130, fellow,
u, 1, 97
virtue, medicinal quality, *u*, 3, 13
visor, a mask, *i*, 4, 30, *i*, 5, 24
voice, *n*, vote, *i*, 2, 19
wagoner, a charioteer, *uu*, 2, 2
walk, to step aside, *uu*, 1, 78
wall (take the), *i*, 1, 16
wanton, *adv*, ungoverned, uncontrolled,
u, 5, 72; sportive, *u*, 6, 19
wanton, *n*, a spoiled child, a playful
child, *ii*, 2, 179, a gay or sportive per-
son, *i*, 4, 35
ward, one under guardianship, *i*, 5, 42
ware, aware, *i*, 1, 131
watch, to be up late, *iv*, 4, 9
watching, *n*, staying awake, lack of sleep,
iv, 4, 8

- wax (a man of), i, 3, 76, (a form of), iii, 3, 126
 wax, to grow, i, 5, 128
 ways, *n pl*, roads, paths, iv, 1, 79
 ways, *adv*, (go thy), go along, ii, 5, 45
 we (*the royal*), i, 1, 108, iii, 1, 192, 201, v, 3, 189, 194
 weak, unmanly, unworthy of a gentleman, ii, 4, 181
 weakest goes to the wall, i, 1, 17
 weeds, clothes, v, 1, 39
 well, in bliss, in heaven, iv, 5, 76, v, 1, 17
 well-flower'd, ii, 4, 64
 well-govern'd, well-conducted, well-behaved, i, 5, 70
 well said, well done, i, 5, 88
 wench, girl, lass, ii, 4, 4, ii, 5, 45, iii, 3, 143
 weraday, *interj*, welladay, iii, 2, 37, iv, 5, 15
 what, whatever, ii, 6, 3
 what, *interj* of impatient calling, i, 3, 3, 4
 what dost thou? what hast thou to do? iii, 5, 61
 what (know), to know what's what, i, 5, 86
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 which, who, iii, 3, 123; iii, 5, 80, v, 3, 250
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 whoreson, fellow, iv, 4, 20
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 will, *n*, desire, ii, 3, 28
 will none, will not have it, iii, 5, 140
 wink, to shut, be closed, iii, 2, 6
 winking at, shutting my eyes to, v, 3, 294
 wit, intellect, mind, iii, 3, 125, 130, iv, 5, 125; wisdom, common sense, i, 4, 49, iii, 5, 74, (Dian's), i, 1, 216
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 withal, with, i, 5, 117, 145, iii, 1, 81; therewith, thereby, i, 1, 119, also, at the same time, ii, 1, 159
 without, outside of, iii, 3, 17
 without-book, recited from memory, i, 4, 7 Cf i, 2, 61
 wits, intellect, iv, 1, 47, (five), five senses, i, 4, 47 (cf ii, 4, 77)
 woes, woful objects, v, 3, 179
 womb, belly, v, 1, 65, v, 3, 45
 word, a watchword, motto, i, 4, 40
 world's, from this world, iii, 3, 20
 worm, the rose caterpillar, i, 1, 158
 worms' meat, food for worms, iii, 1, 112
 worser, worse, ii, 3, 29, iii, 2, 108
 worth, one's possessions, ii, 6, 32
 worthy, noble, of high rank, iii, 5, 146
 wot, know, iii, 2, 139
 wretch, a term of affection, i, 3, 44
 writ, *pret*, wrote, v, 3, 246, *p p*, written, i, 2, 44, 45, v, 2, 4, written down, iv, 2, 1, v, 3, 82
 wrong (do), to treat in an unfriendly way, i, 1, 203
 wrought, *p p*, procured, iii, 5, 145
 year, *pl*, years, i, 3, 2
 years (much in), advanced in age, iii, 5, 46
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THE TRAGEDY OF
HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

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INTRODUCTION

ON JULY 26, 1602, 'The Revenge of Hamlett Prince Denmarke as yt was latelie Acted by the Lord Chamberlyne his servantes' (Shakespeare's company) was entered in the Stationers' Register by James Roberts; but Roberts did not bring the book out until 1604. His edition, the Second Quarto,¹ appears to have been printed from Shakespeare's autograph manuscript, and must be accepted as the main authority for the text, though it swarms with misprints. Meantime, in 1603, a pirated version appeared: 'The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke. By William Shake-speare. As it hath bene diuerse times acted by his Highnesse seruants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Vniuersities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where. At London printed for N[icholas]. L[ing]. and Iohn Trundell. 1603.' This is the First Quarto. It presents the play in a strangely garbled form which will occupy us presently. Bad as it is, it is often helpful in settling some detail of the text.

The First Folio (1623) omits more than two hundred lines that are undoubtedly Shakespeare's;² but it supplies (besides a line or two here and there) five genuine passages which the Second Quarto omits,³ and it often corrects a manifest error or affords a superior reading. The printers of the First Folio certainly used as copy a different manuscript from that used by the printers of the Second Quarto. Wilson thinks that it was a careless transcript made for them in 1622 or 1623 from the manuscript prompt-book of the Globe Theatre, and that this prompt-book, though taken direct from Shakespeare's autograph manuscript, had been edited in many matters of

¹Six copies of the Second Quarto are known. Three of them bear the date 1604 and three the date 1605 in the title page. A few variant readings in the 1605 copies represent changes made in the course of printing. See Wilson, *The Manuscript of Shakespeare's Hamlet*, 1934, pp. 123, 124. The Third Quarto (1611), the Fourth (undated), and the Fifth (1637) are of little or no textual consequence.

²See Textual Notes, pp. 299 ff.

³ii, 2, 243-276 ('Let . . . attended'), 352-377; iv, 5, 161-163; v, 1, 38-41 ('Why . . . without arms'); v, 2, 68-80.

detail by the Globe book-holder.¹ However this may be—and nothing short of revelation can ever solve such problems beyond dispute—nobody can deny that the Folio (besides supplying several omissions) preserves the correct reading again and again where the Second Quarto goes astray. An editor must use his best judgment, and the authority of the Quarto does not warrant an inferior reading where the Folio furnishes one that is manifestly better.² Otherwise we are forced to infer that prompters and proofreaders can (or could) improve Shakespeare.

External evidence for the date of HAMLET is scanty. Meres, writing in 1598, does not mention it. 'The humorous man shall end his part in peace' (ii, 2, 334, 335) may or may not allude to Jonson's *Every Man Out of his Humour*, which seems to have been acted late in 1599. Gabriel Harvey's manuscript note in his copy of Speght's 1598 edition of Chaucer is indecisive: 'The younger sort takes much delight in Shakespeare's Venus, & Adonis: but his Lucrece, & his tragedie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, haue it in them, to please the wiser sort.' It has been argued that the note must have been written before the death of the second Earl of Essex (February 25, 1601) because Harvey remarks, 'The Earle of Essex much commendes Albions England'; but that is forcing the present tense rather hard. However, 1600 or 1601 is a reasonable date for the play.

For the plot Shakespeare went to Volume V of Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques* (1576). Belleforest worked up his *histoire* from the *Historia Danica* of Saxo Grammaticus (ca. 1200; first printed in 1514), expanding and moralizing *more suo*. An English translation of his tale was printed in 1608.

In Belleforest there is no mystery about the King's death. His brother kills him at a banquet and justifies the act by alleging that it was done to rescue the Queen from a murder-

¹Wilson, *The Manuscript*, pp 64-67; *Hamlet*, p. xxvii. Parrott and Craig maintain that the copy used for the Folio was a transcript, not of the prompt-book but of 'the manuscript on which the final prompt-book prepared for the licenser, from which the actors' parts would be transcribed, was based' (*The Tragedy of Hamlet*, 1938, p 50).

²Wilson's own text (1934) is evidence in this regard, and the same is true of Parrott and Craig's (1938).

ous attack by her husband Hamlet is a mere stripling, absolutely in his uncle's power. He feigns madness to protect himself until there shall come an opportunity for revenge. The ancient idea that madmen are sacred¹ is implied, though not expressed. His uncle is suspicious, and resolves to put him to death at once if he can satisfy himself that the boy is not mad indeed. He attempts to entrap him by means of a young woman, and also by the agency of a spy who hides in the Queen's chamber; but in vain. The repentant Queen becomes her son's confidante in his plan of revenge. After a riotous feast, Hamlet sets fire to the hall and burns the drunken courtiers to death. His uncle, who has retired to his chamber, he decapitates. Then he delivers an oration to the people, explaining all the facts, and is crowned as king. His further history does not concern us. He is finally killed in a battle with another uncle.

Between Belleforest's story and Shakespeare's *HAMLET* an old play on the subject intervenes. Henslowe records a performance of it on June 11, 1594, and Thomas Lodge quotes it in his *Wits Miserie, and the Worlds Madnesse* (1596): 'As pale as the Visard of ye ghost which cried so miserally at ye Theator, like an oister wife, *Hamlet, reuenge*' (p. 56). Nashe alludes to it in his Epistle prefixed to Greene's *Menaphon* (1589): 'English *Seneca* read by Candle light yeelds many good sentences . . .; and if you intreate him faire in a frostie morning, hee will afford you whole *Hamlets*, I should say handfulls of Tragicall speeches.' The author is unknown. Nashe seems to glance at Thomas Kyd in the context of the passage just quoted, but his language does not even hint at Kyd's authorship of the old *Hamlet*.² The play was evidently of the Senecan sort, like *The Spanish Tragedy*, and one of the characters was a pale-faced ghost (presumably of the murdered King) who cried

¹Thus David protects himself by assuming madness at the court of Achish (*1 Samuel*, xxi, 10-15). The same idea of the sacredness of madmen underlies the legend of Lucius Junius Brutus, whose strategic pretence of idiocy ('his folly's show') is mentioned in *Lucrece*, ll 1807-1820. See Lavy, i, 56; Ovid, *Fasti*, ii, 717, 718. Both David and Brutus are cited by Belleforest in his *hystoire* of Hamlet. See Buckle, *Miscellaneous and Posthumous Works*, 1872, III, 357.

²See McKerrow's note in his edition of Nashe, IV, 449-452.

'Hamlet, revenge!' Further than this, we have no knowledge of its contents. The First Quarto seems to be merely a bad copy of an abridged version of Shakespeare's HAMLET—probably of a version cobbled up by some literary hack for provincial acting. Some passages are clearly the work of this dramatic journeyman, and others may possibly be remnants of the old play. Thus the Queen's vow to assist Hamlet (sig. G 3)¹ agrees with Belleforest in a point in which Shakespeare differs. That she keeps her word appears from her conversation with Horatio (sig. H 2). Here Horatio informs her of Hamlet's return in secret from the English voyage and of the change made by Hamlet in 'the Packet sent to the king of England, Wherein he saw himselfe betray'd to death.' She charges Horatio to

bid him a while
Be wary of his presence, lest that he
Faile in that he goes about

Der Bestrafte Brudermord,² a wild German form of Hamlet drama, has often been used—with varying degrees of ingenuity—in attempts to reconstruct the old play.³ This eccentric offshoot of the Hamlet tradition was first printed in 1781 from a manuscript dated 1710, which has disappeared. That some *Hamlet* or other was acted at Dresden in 1626 is an established fact; but the relation of this to *Der Bestrafte Brudermord* is a matter of conjecture. The Prologue of *Der Brudermord* may be a fragment of the Prologue of the *Ur-Hamlet*, and here and there one notes a detail that may have come from the lost play. The utterly comic fashion in which Hamlet disposes of the representatives of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern has some resemblance to an incident in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, and also to an incident in the *Alphonsus* eccentrically ascribed to Chapman,⁴

¹ See the passage quoted in the note to iii, 4, 28 (p. 239, below).

² Cohn, *Shakespeare in Germany*, 1865; Creizenach, *Die Schauspiele der Englischen Komodianten*, 1889. There is an English translation in Furness's *Variorum*.

³ For the whole matter (with all necessary references) see Parrott and Craig, pp. 10–15.

⁴ See Bowers, *Modern Language Notes*, XLVIII (1933), 105–107.

but one can only hope that the author of the *Ur-Hamlet* is not chargeable with this device. Hamlet's guards land with him on an island and undertake to shoot him. Stationed between them, he throws himself down at the critical moment, and they shoot each other. 'O just heaven!' he exclaims, 'thanks be to thee for this angelic idea!'

Both in Shakespeare and in Belleforest we have a story of necessarily deferred revenge, but the situation at the outset is not the same, and the ground of the necessity differs accordingly. In the old tale the murder is no secret; but the avenger is helpless, a mere boy in his uncle's power. In the drama, on the other hand, the murder is suspected by no one until the Ghost reveals it. But this is 'spectral evidence.' Hamlet believes that the apparition is indeed the ghost of his father and that it has told the truth. Yet it may be a demon in his father's shape, tempting him to kill an innocent man. This doubt as to the ambiguous apparition accords with ancient doctrine and was perfectly intelligible to any Elizabethan audience.¹ Disregard of Hamlet's dilemma has led to misinterpretation of his character, as if he were a procrastinator, a vain dreamer, an impulsive creature of feeble will. But Shakespeare has done his best to enforce the imperative scruple as to the apparition. It inspires and dictates Horatio's challenge (i, 1, 46 ff.); it is implicit in Bernardo's assent (i, 109); it is manifest in Hamlet's declared resolution (i, 2, 244-246), and it finds solemn utterance when he adjures the Ghost to speak (i, 4, 40 ff.). Nothing could be clearer, in this regard, than Horatio's warning (i, 4, 69 ff.):

What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other, hornble form
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness?²

¹This doctrine is concisely expressed by Increase Mather: 'As the evil Spirit will speak good Words, so doth he sometimes appear in the likeness of good Men, to the end that he may the more effectually deceive and delude all such as shall be so unhappy as to entertain converses with him' (*An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences*, 1684, p. 216).

²Cf. *King Lear*, iv, 6, 67 ff.

All this leads up to Hamlet's soliloquy at the end of Act II:

The spirit that I have seen
May be a devil, and the devil hath power
T' assume a pleasing shape, yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative than this.

And the substance of this soliloquy is repeated and enforced when Hamlet explains to Horatio the purpose of the play within the play (iii, 2, 80-92)

There is a play to-night before the King.
One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
Which I have told thee, of my father's death.
I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe my uncle. If his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stutty. Give him heedful note;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And after we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming.

Hamlet cannot act upon mere spectral evidence. The testimony of the Ghost must somehow be corroborated. The murderer must be forced to testify against himself. Then, and not till then, will action be possible for a reasonable man. 'The play's the thing!' Significant, too, is the fact that the calm and philosophic Horatio—Hamlet's sole confidant as to the Ghost's revelation—accepts the crucial experiment as necessary, and agrees with Hamlet that its success is conclusive (iii, 2, 92-94, 297-301).

The necessity for some device like the play within the play is due to the failure of Hamlet's assumed madness to achieve its purpose. In the old saga and in Belleforest, Hamlet feigns madness for self-protection. It is made perfectly clear that the King can kill him at any moment, and that he refrains only because he cannot satisfy himself that the boy is in his right mind. He

tries to entrap him into some act that will prove his sanity, but in vain. Hamlet is too shrewd for him and carries through his pretence of insanity until at last he finds the moment for a terrible revenge. Thus his pretended madness, like the deferred vengeance, was an essential element in the saga and the old play. How the old play accounted for it, it is idle to conjecture. In Shakespeare's drama, however, Hamlet's motive for acting the madman is obvious. We speak unguardedly in the presence of children and madmen, for we take it for granted that they will not listen or will not understand ; and so the King or the Queen (for Hamlet does not know that his mother is ignorant of her husband's crime) may say something that will afford the evidence needed to confirm the testimony of the Ghost. The device is adopted on the spur of the moment (i, 5, 169 ff.), and, once adopted, it must be maintained. But it is unsuccessful. The King is always on his guard, and the Queen is not an accomplice.¹

The earliest moment at which Hamlet is justified in striking the blow does not come until the end of the third scene of the third act—or, in other words, until Shakespeare's play is more than half finished. It is the moment when Hamlet finds his uncle at prayer (iii, 3, 73):

Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;
And now I'll do't

Now, for the first time, Claudius is off his guard, and his attitude of prayer confirms the evidence—already strong enough—that he is guilty.

Obviously, up to this point, we must acquit Hamlet of procrastination. He had adopted the device of madness on the instant, immediately after the Ghost's revelation ; and, when this failed as a detective agency, he had utilized the first opportunity for a further test—the play within the play. Note the promptitude of his action in this regard. No sooner had he heard the players' declamation and observed its emotional effect than his plan was formed. When the players appear at Elsinore

¹ So Hamlet learns at last in iii, 4, 28-30 (see the note).

he is at his wit's end for evidence. Partly from love of the drama (for the actors are old favourites), partly to distract his mind from a hideous and hitherto insoluble problem, he calls for a 'taste of their quality.' The emotional effect of the Pyrrhus declamation—both upon the player and upon himself—suggests a device which he instantly puts into action. The interval between the appearance of the Ghost and the arrival of the players, is hardly more than a couple of months.¹

The sight of the King on his knees gives the finishing touch to the testimony of 'The Mousetrap.' Now, then, at this the first usable opportunity, is Hamlet, if ever, in the mood to kill the King. Yet this is the one moment when it is impossible for anyone but an assassin to strike. This would be true if Shakespeare had merely introduced the King in the attitude of prayer. How much stronger is the case when our very souls have been shaken by the terrific mental and spiritual struggle through which Claudius has just passed—when (for the first time) our sympathies (if we are human) have gone out to the man whom we have hitherto regarded with abhorrence. The strenuous avenger Laertes would not have hesitated to plunge his sword into the King's back as heartily and instinctively as a bulldog bites.² But such an act is not in accord with Hamlet's nature and education. This does not mean that he is a born weakling or that he has learned inertia at the university. For we must accept the valedictory tribute of young Fortinbras—the pattern of vigorous soldiership—when he declares that Hamlet 'was likely, had he been put on, to have prov'd most royally' (v, 2, 408, 409). Hamlet cannot butcher a defenceless man. Nor would such an act accord with the emotional mood of the audience at this juncture. It is a dramatic, a moral, almost a physical impossibility.³

¹The marriage of Claudius and Gertrude took place about a month after the murder (i, 2, 138-151). The arrival of the players was 'twice two months' after the King's death (iii, 2, 136). Some time had intervened between the marriage and the Ghost's revelation.

²Cf. iv, 7, 125-127, iv, 5, 131-136.

³Incidentally, one should remember that the Hamlet story has many incidents that are still to come. The play cannot end here with a triumphant revenge.

Shakespeare is face to face with an exacting problem. He has brought his two main personages together in such a way that it is impossible for Hamlet to strike, though the opportunity is ideal, and though it is, in theory, his sacred duty to kill his uncle as soon as he can. How is he to extricate his characters from the situation in which he has deliberately involved them?

Manifestly it is out of the question for Hamlet to give the real reason for sheathing his sword, for that would be to make him repudiate the traditional code to which he still subscribes, though he has outgrown its literal savagery. The only excuse or pretext for inaction now must consist in his persuading himself that, after all, the moment is *not* favourable, and there is but one way in which he can so persuade himself—by proving that, if he strikes now, his vengeance will be ineffectual. Hence we have the diabolical outburst which prompted Dr. Johnson's famous comment: 'This speech, in which Hamlet is not content with taking blood for blood, but contrives damnation for the man that he would punish, is too horrible to be read or to be uttered.'

But these diabolical sentiments are not Hamlet's sentiments. He does not really postpone his uncle's death in order that he may consign him to perdition. The speech is merely a pretext for delay. The problem is not, 'Why does Hamlet entertain such infernal sentiments?' but rather, 'How happens it that such a pretext occurs to him?' And the answer is obvious. Because the views in question accord with an old-established convention with regard to adequate revenge. With this convention the Elizabethan audience was familiar, and it made allowance accordingly; for language means only what it is meant to mean by the speaker and what it is understood to mean by the hearer. Examples in abundance establish the convention. Thus in *2 Henry VI* (iv, 10, 83-85), when that mild and almost idyllic character, Alexander Iden, 'a poor esquire of Kent that loves his king,' kills the rebel Cade, he expresses himself in just such terms.

Die, damned wretch, the curse of her that bare thee!
And as I thrust thy body in with my sword,
So wish I, I might thrust thy soul to hell!

And it assumes idiomatic guise when Ancient Pistol curses Captain Fluellen: 'Die and be damn'd! and figo for thy friendship!' (*Henry V*, III, 6, 60).¹

The delay is not for long. The moment comes in the very next scene, when Hamlet is nerved to strike and when (if his sword had found the victim it aimed at) neither he—nor even we, his modern judges—could have felt the slightest scruple. And then he acts with decision. It is in his mother's chamber, when he thrusts his sword through the arras and kills Polonius, mistaking him for the King.² This is the turning point of the tragedy. The King, who knows now that Hamlet means to kill him, lays his plans accordingly.³ There is no moment until the very end of the play when Hamlet has Claudius at his mercy. Both before Hamlet's embarkation for England, and after his return, Claudius is well guarded and Hamlet is under surveillance.⁴ And finally, when vengeance comes, it involves the avenger as well as the criminal. And this is well, for nothing could so completely justify Hamlet as the situation at the end of the tragedy. He kills the King in hot blood—as it were in

¹The fullest expression of this principle occurs in Nashe, *The Unfortunate Traveller*, 1594 (ed. Grosart, V, 182, 183); cf. *Alphonsus* (in the Pearson ed. of Chapman, III, 276, 277). See also 2 *Henry VI*, III, 2, 216 ff., *Richard II*, IV, 1, 25, 26; Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, IV, Chorus, 25–48 (ed. Manly, II, 589, 590); *I Jeronimo*, I, 3, 78–80 (Kyd, ed. Boas, p. 307); Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, III, 2, 9–12 (ed. Bullen, II, 57, 58, cf. IV, 5, 12–15, II, 80); Webster, *The White Devil*, V, 1, 67–72 (ed. Lucas, I, 166); Machin, *The Dumb Knight* (Collier's Dodsley, IV, 428); Ford, *'Tis Pity*, V, 4 (ed. Gifford and Dyce, I, 195, 196); Otway, *Don Carlos* (*Works*, ed. 1712, I, 133); Shirley, *The Cardinal*, IV, 1 (ed. Gifford and Dyce, V, 316); Southerne, *The Disappointment* (*Works*, ed. 1721, I, 136). Wilson, who cites Iden and compares the conversation of the King and Laertes, oddly enough takes 'not shriving tyme allow'd' (V, 2, 47) as actually a part of Hamlet's missive dooming Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. See note, p. 285, below.

²This point is made perfectly clear by Hamlet's own words: 'Is it the King?' and 'I took thee for thy better' (III, 4, 25, 32). And Claudius understands his purpose 'It had been so with us [i.e., with me, the King], had we been there' (IV, 1, 13); cf. IV, 7, 1–5. In Belleforest there is no hint of any such mistake.

³See the notes on III, 1, 177, III, 3, 3; IV, 3, 66 (pp. 215, 234, 253).

⁴See IV, 1, 33, IV, 3, 14, 56. Of course the guards do not always appear on the stage.

a hand-to-hand struggle—and, in this mêlée, he acts, to all intents and purposes, in self-defence, for Claudius (by the trick of the poisoned rapier and the poisoned drink) has struck the first blow.¹

How old is Shakespeare's Hamlet? Specific evidence is supplied by the Sexton (v, 1, 155 ff). In reply to Hamlet's question, 'How long hast thou been a grave-maker?' he declares that he 'came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras'; and he adds, 'It was the very day that young Hamlet was born,' and 'I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.' In support of this reckoning, we have his date for the burial of Yorick: 'This skull hath lien you i' th' earth three-and-twenty years.' And Yorick had borne Hamlet 'on his back a thousand times.' On the fallacious principle that 'figures won't lie,' the grave-digger's evidence has been accepted by some critics, despite its flat contradiction of the testimony of Laertes and Ophelia (both of whom describe Hamlet as a very young man), of the King, and of Hamlet himself.² Evidently he cannot be more than twenty years of age when the play begins, and the whole action of the drama occupies only two or three months. 'Revision' has been suggested to explain the gross inconsistency. But such revision cannot have been Shakespeare's, unless he had lost his memory in the interval; and, if it was an actor's or a manager's revision, we may safely ignore it. Misprint or miscopying is a more plausible guess. Such errors are common in numerals, as every proofreader knows; and they were particularly easy in Shakespeare's day, when Roman numerals were often used. It is comforting to find in the First Quarto 'this dozen year' instead of 'three-and-twenty';

Looke you, heres a scull hath bin here this dozen yeare,
Let me see, I euer since our last king *Hamlet*
Slew *Fortenbrasse* in combat

King Claudius is a character that repays careful study. It is a mistake to regard him as a usurper. In Hamlet's Denmark,

¹ Compare also what Hamlet says to Horatio of the King's having 'thrown out his angle for my proper life' in the mission to England (v, 2, 66, 67).

² See i, 3, 5-16 (and notes); iii, 1, 167, 168, ii, 2, 12; i, 5, 101

as in Macbeth's Scotland,¹ the crown was elective within the limits of the royal family, and there was nothing against the law in Claudius's taking advantage of his nephew's absence to bring about his own election. Nowhere in the play is the question of usurpation raised. The nearest approach to such an idea comes in Hamlet's passionate outburst to his mother (iii, 4, 98-101):

A vice of kings;
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole
And put it in his pocket!

And this ambiguous evidence is vacated by his words to Horatio when he is setting forth, with relentless logic, the 'perfect conscience' of his vengeful plan (v, 2, 64 ff.):

He that hath kill'd my king, and whor'd my mother,
Popp'd in between th' election and my hopes;
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such coz'nage.

Hamlet's deliberate use of the term 'election,'² and of 'my hopes' instead of 'my rights' is decisive. The council of nobles has elected Claudius, and no Dane questions his title. This fact, indeed, is implied when, in his first speech from the throne (i, 2, 1 ff.), he thanks the Councillors for their aid and comfort. Claudius has wronged his nephew by excluding him from the succession, but the wrong was effected in strict accordance with legal procedure.³

King Claudius is a superb figure—almost as great a dramatic creation as Hamlet himself. His intellectual powers are of the highest order. He is eloquent—formal when formality is appropriate (as in the speech from the throne), graciously familiar when familiarity is in place (as in his treatment of the family of Polonius), persuasive to an almost superhuman degree (as in his manipulation of the insurgent Laertes)—always

¹See *Macbeth*, i, 4, 39, ii, 4, 31 (and notes).

²Hamlet uses the word again in v, 2, 366, when he prophesies that 'th' election lights on Fortinbras'.

³See J. P. Malleon, *The Times Literary Supplement*, January 4, 1936, p. 15.

and everywhere a model of royal dignity. His courage is manifested, under the most terrifying circumstances, when the mob breaks into the palace. His self-control when the dumb show enacts his secret crime before his eyes is nothing less than marvellous.¹ It was no accident that Shakespeare gave him that phrase which has become the ultimate pronouncement of the divin^e right of monarchy: 'Such divinity doth hedge a king.'

Intellectually, then, we must admit Claudius to as high a rank as Hamlet himself.² What are we to say of him morally? On this point there is danger of misinterpretation. Claudius is often regarded as a moral monster—selfish, calculating, passionless—subtle and cold as a serpent. From such an error we are rescued by one of the supreme passages in all Shakespeare—the King's soliloquy after 'The Mousetrap' has caught his conscience (iii, 3, 36 ff.):

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven,
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murther!

In this soliloquy Claudius unlocks his soul. It reveals him not only as passionately remorseful—with a heart in no wise cauterized by crime³—but as so clear-sighted, so pitiless in the analysis of his own offences and of the motives that actuated them, that he cannot juggle with his conscience.

What form of prayer
Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murther'
That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murther—
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.

¹For the object of the dumb show see the note on iii, 2, 145. Cf. W. W. Lawrence, *Journal of English and German Philology*, XVIII (1919), 7 ff., Pearn, *Review of English Studies*, XI (1935), 403; Granville-Barker, *Prefaces to Hamlet*, 3d Series, 1937, pp. 89 ff. For Wilson's theory, which differs *totò caelo*, see his *What Happens in Hamlet*, 2d ed., 1937, pp. 144 ff.

²The testimony of the Ghost is well deserved 'with witchcraft of his wit' (i, 5, 43). 'Thou know'st,' says Iago, 'we work by wit, and not by witchcraft', but Claudius's wit *is* witchcraft. He has bewitched both Queen and state.

³Compare the King's 'aside' in iii, 1, 49–54, which prepares us for the soliloquy.

His crime was a crime of passion. 'My queen' is the acme of the climax. So she was in the Ghost's revelation to Hamlet (1, 5, 74, 75):

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd.

To neglect or undervalue Claudius destroys the balance of the tragedy. On the stage, for generations, his lines were cut unmercifully, and his rôle was assigned to an inferior actor, so that he became the typical melodramatic villain, who frowns and mouths and struts and beats the air. And Hamlet has suffered accordingly, and has too often been conceived as a pathetic creature of high imagination but feeble will. Otherwise, why did he not abolish this ineffectual obstacle with a sweep of the arm? Of late, however, managers and actors have done better in this regard, but the prejudice lingers. Of Shakespeare's intent there can be no doubt. The play is a contest between two great opponents. This Hamlet understands; and he expresses the truth in his words to Horatio (v, 2, 61, 62), which might well be a summarizing motto for the play:

The pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

THE TRAGEDY OF
HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

[Dramatis Personæ.

Claudius, King of Denmark.

Hamlet, son to the former, and nephew to the present King.

Polonius, Lord Chamberlain.

Horatio, friend to *Hamlet*.

Laertes, son to *Polonius*.

<i>Voltemand,</i> <i>Cornelius,</i> <i>Rosencrantz,</i> <i>Guiltenstein,</i> <i>Osric,</i> A Gentleman,	} courtiers.
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A Priest.

<i>Marcellus,</i> <i>Bernardo,</i>	} officers
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Francisco, a soldier.

Reynaldo, servant to *Polonius*.

Players

Two Clowns, gravediggers.

Fortinbras, Prince of Norway.

A Norwegian Captain

English Ambassadors.

Gertrude, Queen of Denmark, mother to *Hamlet*.

Ophelia, daughter to *Polonius*.

Ghost of *Hamlet's* Father.

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers, Attendants.

SCENE.—*Elsnore.*]

THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

Act I. Scene I. [*Elsinore A platform before the Castle.*]

Enter two *Sentinels*—[first,] *Francisco*, [who paces up and down at his post, then] *Bernardo*, [who approaches him].

Bei Who's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me Stand and unfold yourself.

Ber. Long live the King!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

5

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve. Get thee to bed, *Francisco*.

Fran. For this relief much thanks. 'Tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring. 10

Ber. Well, good night.

If you do meet *Horatio* and *Marcellus*,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Enter *Horatio* and *Marcellus*.

Fran. I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who is there?

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane. 15

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier.

Who hath reliev'd you?

Fran. Bernardo hath my place.

Give you good night.

Exit.

Mar. Holla, Bernardo!

Ber. Say—

What is *Horatio* there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio. Welcome, good Marcellus. 20

Mar. What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?

Ber. I have seen nothing

Mar. Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us. 25

Therefore I have entreated him along,
With us to watch the minutes of this night,
That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

Hor. Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

Ber. Sit down awhile, 30
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we two nights have seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all, 35
When yond same star that's westward from the pole
Had made his course t' illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one—

Enter Ghost

Mar. Peace! break thee off! Look where it comes again!

Ber. In the same figure, like the King that's dead. 41

Mar. Thou art a scholar, speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the King? Mark it, Horatio

Hor. Most like. It harrows me with fear and wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Question it, Horatio. 45

Hor. What art thou that usurp'st this time of night

Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? By heaven I charge thee speak!

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See, it stalks away! 50

Hor. Stay! Speak, speak! I charge thee speak!

Exit Ghost.

Mar. 'Tis gone and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio? You tremble and look pale.
Is not this something more than fantasy?

What think you on't? 55

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the King?

Hor. As thou art to thyself.

Such was the very armour he had on 60

When he th' ambitious Norway combated.
So frown'd he once when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour, 65
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work I know not;
But, in the gross and scope of my opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me he that knows, 70
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land,
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon
And foreign mart for implements of war;
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task 75
Does not divide the Sunday from the week.

What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day?
Who is't that can inform me?

<i>Hor.</i>	That can I.	
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,		80
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,		
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,		
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,		
Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet		
(For so this side of our known world esteem'd him)		85
Did slay this Fortinbras, who, by a seal'd compact,		
Well ratified by law and heraldry,		
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands		
Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror;		
Against the which a moiety competent		90
Was gaged by our king; which had return'd		
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,		
Had he been vanquisher, as, by the same comart		
And carriage of the article design'd,		
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,		95
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,		
Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,		
Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute,		
For food and diet, to some enterprise		
That hath a stomach in't; which is no other,		100
As it doth well appear unto our state,		
But to recover of us, by strong hand		
And terms compulsory, those foresaid lands		
So by his father lost; and this, I take it,		
Is the main motive of our preparations,		105
The source of this our watch, and the chief head		
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.		

Ber. I think it be no other but e'en so.
Well may it sort that this portentous figure

Comes armed through our watch, so like the King 110
That was and is the question of these wars.

Hor. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead 115
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets,
As stars with trains of fire, and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse. 120
And even the like precursor of fierce events,
As harbingers preceding still the fates
And prologue to the omen coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climature and countrymen. 125

Enter Ghost again.

But soft! behold! Lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion!

Spreads his arms.

If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me.
If there be any good thing to be done, 130
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me.

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which happily foreknowing may avoid,
O, speak! 135

Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth
(For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death),

The cock crows.

Speak of it! Stay, and speak!—Stop it, Marcellus!

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan ? 140

Hor. Do, if it will not stand

Ber. 'Tis here !

Hor. 'Tis here !

Mar. 'Tis gone !

Exit Ghost.

We do it wrong, being so majestical,

To offer it the show of violence ;

For it is as the air, invulnerable, 145

And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started, like a guilty thing

Upon a fearful summons. I have heard

The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn, 150

Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat

Awake the god of day ; and at his warning,

Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,

Th' extravagant and erring spirit hies

To his confine ; and of the truth herein 155

This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.

Some say that ever, 'gainst that season comes

Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,

The bird of dawning singeth all night long ; 160

And then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad,

The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike,

No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,

So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

Hor. So have I heard and do in part believe it. 165

But look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,

Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill.

Break we our watch up ; and by my advice

Let us impart what we have seen to-night

Unto young Hamlet ; for, upon my life, 170

This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
 Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
 As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Mar. Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know 174
 Where we shall find him most conveniently. *Exeunt*

Scene II. [*Elsinore. A room of state in the Castle.*]

Flourish. Enter *Claudius, King of Denmark, Gertrude the Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes* and his sister *Ophelia*, [*Voltemand, Cornelius,*] *Lords Attendant.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
 The memory be green, and that it us befitted
 To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
 To be contracted in one brow of woe,
 Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature 5
 That we with wisest sorrow think on him
 Together with remembrance of ourselves.
 Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
 Th' imperial jointress to this warlike state,
 Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy, 10
 With an auspicious, and a dropping eye,
 With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,
 In equal scale weighing delight and dole,
 Taken to wife; nor have we herein barr'd
 Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone 15
 With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
 Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
 Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
 Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
 Our state to be disjoint and out of frame, 20
 Colleague'd with this dream of his advantage,
 He hath not fail'd to pester us with message

Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bands of law,
To our most valiant brother. So much for him. 25
Now for ourself and for this time of meeting.
Thus much the business is we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,
Who, impotent and bedrid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose, to suppress 30
His further gait herein, in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions are all made
Out of his subject, and we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltemand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway, 35
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the King. more than the scope
Of these dilated articles allow. [*Gives a paper.*]
Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor., Volt. In that, and all things, will we show our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing. Heartily farewell. 41

Exeunt Voltemand and Cornelius.

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
You told us of some suit. What is't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane
And lose your voice. What wouldst thou beg, Laertes, 45
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

Laer. My dread lord, 50
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark
To show my duty in your coronation,
Yet now I must confess, that duty done,

My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France 55
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
By laboursome petition, and at last
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent. 60
I do beseech you give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes. Time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will!
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son—

Ham. [*aside*] A little more than kin, and less than kind!

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you? 66

Ham. Not so, my lord. I am too much i' th' sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not for ever with thy veiled lids 70
Seek for thy noble father in the dust.
Thou know'st 'tis common. All that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee? 75

Ham. Seems, madam? Nay, it is. I know not 'seems.'
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye, 80
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,
That can denote me truly. These indeed seem,
For they are actions that a man might play;
But I have that within which passeth show— 85
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father;
But you must know, your father lost a father,
That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound 90
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow But to persever
In obstinate condolment is a course
Of impious stubbornness. 'Tis unmanly grief;
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven, 95
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschool'd;
For what we know must be, and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we in our peevish opposition 100
Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd, whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse till he that died to-day, 105
'This must be so.' We pray you throw to earth
This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father; for let the world take note
You are the most immediate to our throne,
And with no less nobility of love 110
Than that which dearest father bears his son
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire;
And we beseech you, bend you to remain 115
Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son
Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet.
I pray thee stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.
Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam. 120
King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply.

Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come.
This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart; in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day 125
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the King's rouse the heaven shall bruit again,
Respeaking earthly thunder. Come away.

Flourish. Exeunt all but Hamlet.

Ham. O that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew! 130
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't! ah, fie! 'Tis an unweeded garden 135
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
But two months dead! Nay, not so much, not two.
So excellent a king, that was to this
Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother 140
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? Why, she would hang on him
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on; and yet, within a month— 145
Let me not think on't! Frailty, thy name is woman!—
A little month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she followed my poor father's body
Like Niobe, all tears—why she, even she
(O God! a beast that wants discourse of reason 150
Would have mourn'd longer) married with my uncle;
My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules. Within a month,
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears

Had left the flushing in her galled eyes, 155
She married. O, most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not, nor it cannot come to good.
But break my heart, for I must hold my tongue!

Enter *Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo.* *

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

Ham. I am glad to see you well. 160
Horatio!—or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend—I'll change that name with you.
And what make you from Wittenberg, *Horatio?*
Marcellus? 165

Mar. My good lord!

Ham. I am very glad to see you.—[*To Bernardo*] Good
even, sir.—

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so, 170
Nor shall you do my ear that violence
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself. I know you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinore?

We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart. 175

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I prithee do not mock me, fellow student.
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, *Horatio!* The funeral bak'd meats 180
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven
Or ever I had seen that day, *Horatio!*
My father—methinks I see my father.

Hor. O, where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio. 185

Hor. I saw him once. He was a goodly king

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all.

I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw? who? 190

Hor. My lord, the King your father.

Ham. The King my father?

Hor. Season your admiration for a while

With an attent ear, till I may deliver,

Upon the witness of these gentlemen,

This marvel to you.

Ham. For God's love let me hear! 195

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen

(Marcellus and Bernardo) on their watch

In the dead vast and middle of the night

Been thus encount'ed. A figure like your father,

Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pe, 200

Appears before them and with solemn march

Goes slow and stately by them. Thrice he walk'd

By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,

Within his truncheon's length, whilst they distill'd

Almost to jelly with the act of fear, 205

Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me

In dreadful secrecy impart they did,

And I with them the third night kept the watch;

Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,

Form of the thing, each word made true and good, 210

The apparition comes. I knew your father.

These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it?

Hor. My lord, I did;
But answer made it none. Yet once methought 215
It lifted up it head and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak;
But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away
And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange. 220

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;
And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs. But this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night?

Both [Mar and Ber.] We do, my lord. 225

Ham. Arm'd, say you?

Both. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

Both. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not his face?

Hor. O, yes, my lord! He wore his beaver up. 230

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?

Hor. A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there. 235

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Both. Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw't.

Ham. His beard was grizzled—no? 240

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.

Ham. I will watch to-night.
Perchance 'twill walk again.

Hor. I warr'nt it will.

Hap. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape 245
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still;
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding but no tongue. 250
I will requite your loves. So, fare^yyou well.
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you. Farewell.

Exeunt [all but Hamlet].

My father's spirit—in arms? All is not well. 255
I doubt some foul play. Would the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul. Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes. *Exit.*

Scene III. [*Elsinore. A room in the house of Polonius.*]

Enter *Laertes* and *Ophelia*.

Laer. My necessities are embark'd. Farewell.
And, sister, as the winds give benefit
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that?

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour, 5
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,

Forward, not permanent—sweet, not lasting;
The perfume and supplance of a minute;
No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more. 10

For nature crescent does not grow alone
In thews and bulk, but as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now,
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch 15
The virtue of his will, but you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth.
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself, for on his choice depends 20
The safety and health of this whole state,
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it 25
As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed; which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain
If with too credent ear you list his songs, 30
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
To his unmast'ed importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire. 35
The chariest maid is prodigal enough
If she unmask her beauty to the moon.
Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes.
The canker galls the infants of the spring

Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd, 40
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.

Be wary then; best safety lies in fear.

Youth to itself rebels, though none else near

Oph. I shall th' effect of this good lesson keep 45

As watchman to my heart But, good my brother,

Do not as some ungracious pastors do,

Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,

Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,

Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads 50

And recks not his own rede.

Laer. O, fear⁹ me not!

Enter Polonius.

I stay too long. But here my father comes.

A double blessing is a double grace;

Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes? Aboard, aboard, for shame! 55

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,

And you are stay'd for. There—my blessing with thee!

And these few precepts in thy memory •

Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,

Nor any unproportion'd thought his act. 60

Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar:

Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,

Grapple them unto thy soul with hoops of steel;

But do not dull thy palm with entertainment

Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware 65

Of entrance to a quarrel; but being in,

Bear't that th' opposed may beware of thee.

Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;

Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.

Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, 70

But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are most select and generous, chief in that.

Neither a borrower nor a lender be; 75

For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.

This above all—to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man. 80

Farewell. My blessing season this in thee!

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you. Go, your servants tend.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia, and remember well

What I have said to you.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd, 85

And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell. *Exit.*

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought! 90

'Tis told me he hath very oft of late

Given private time to you, and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.

If it be so—as so 'tis put on me,

And that in way of caution—I must tell you 95

You do not understand yourself so clearly

As it behooves my daughter and your honour.

What is between you? Give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me. 100

Pol. Affection? Pooh! You speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I will teach you! Think yourself a baby 105
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly,
Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus) you'll tender me a fool.

Oph. My lord, he hath importun'd me with love 110
In honourable fashion.

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it. Go to, go to!

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks! I do know, 115
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows. These blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat, extinct in both
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,
You must not take for fire. From this time 120
Be something scanter of your maiden presence.
Set your entreatments at a higher rate
Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young,
And with a larger tether may he walk 125
Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,
Not of that dye which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds, 130
The better to beguile. This is for all:

I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth
Have you so slander any moment leisure
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
Look to't, I charge you. Come your ways. 135

Oph. I shall obey, my lord.

Exeunt,

[Scene IV. *Elsinore. The platform before the Castle.*]

Enter *Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus.*

Ham. The air bites shrewdly, it is very cold.

Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.

Ham. What hour now?

Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.

Mar. No, it is struck.

Hor. Indeed? I heard it not. It then draws near the season
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk. 6

A flourish of trumpets, and two pieces go off.
What does this mean, my lord?

Ham. The King doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swagg'ring upspring reels,
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down, 10
The kettledrum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

Hor. Is it a custom?

Ham. Ay, marry, is't;
But to my mind, though I am native here
And to the manner born, it is a custom 15
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.
This heavy-headed revel east and west
Makes us traduc'd and tax'd of other nations;
They clip us drunkards and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition; and indeed it takes 20
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.
So oft it chances in particular men
That, for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As in their birth,—wherein they are not guilty, 25
Since nature cannot choose his origin,—
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,

Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,
Or by some habit that too much o'erleavens
The form of plausible manners, that these men 30
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,
Their virtues else—be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo—
Shall in the general censure take corruption 35
From that particular fault. The dram of e'il
Doth all the noble substance often dout
To his own scandal.

Enter *Ghost*.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd, 40
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane. O, answer me! 45
Let me not burst in ignorance, but tell
Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements, why the sepulchre
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws 50
To cast thee up again. What may this mean
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel,
Revisits thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous, and we fools of nature
So horridly to shake our disposition 55
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? What should we do?

Ghost beckons Hamlet.

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

Mar. Look with what courteous action 60
It waves you to a more removed ground.
But do not go with it!

Hor. No, by no means!

Ham. It will not speak. Then will I follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord!

Ham Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee; 65
And for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again. I'll follow it.

Hor. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff 70
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other, horrible form
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness? Think of it.
The very place puts toys of desperation, 75
Without more motive, into every brain
That looks so many fadoms to the sea
And hears it roar beneath.

Ham. It waves me still.
Go on. I'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands! 80

Hor. Be rul'd. You shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out
And makes each petty artire in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.

[*Ghost beckons.*]

Still am I call'd. Unhand me, gentlemen.

By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me!— 85
I say, away!—Go on. I'll follow thee.

Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.

Hor He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let's follow 'Tis not fit thus to obey him.

Hor Have after To what issue will this come?

Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark. 90

Hor. Heaven will direct it.

Mar. Nay, let's follow him.

Exeunt.

[Scene V. *Elsinore. The Castle. Another part of the
fortifications.*]

Enter Ghost and Hamlet.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? Speak! I'll go no
further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulph'rous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing 5
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak. I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night, 10
And for the day confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid

To tell the secrets of my prison house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word 15
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand an end
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine. 20
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

Ham. O God!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder. 25

Ham. Murder?

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love, 30
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear. 35
'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me. So the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd. But know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O my prophetic soul! 40
My uncle?

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts—
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust 45

The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.

O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there,
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage, and to decline
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!

But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed

And prey on garbage

But soft! methinks I scent the morning air.
Brief let me be Sleeping within my orchard,
My custom always of the afternoon,

Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebona in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leperous distilment, whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man

That swift as quicksilver it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body,
And with a sudden vigour it doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood. So did it mine;
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust
All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd;
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhous'led, disappointed, unanel'd,
No reck'ning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.

Ham. O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible! 80

Ghost. If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not.

Let not the royal bed of Denmark be

A couch for luxury and damned incest.

But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,

Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive 85

Against thy mother aught. Leave her to heaven,

And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge

To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once.

The glowworm shows the matin to be near

And gins to pale his uneffectual fire. 90

Adieu, adieu, adieu! Remember me.

Exit.

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?

And shall I couple hell? Hold, hold, my heart!

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,

But bear me stuffy up. Remember thee? 95

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat

In this distracted globe. Remember thee?

Yea, from the table of my memory

I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,

All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past 100

That youth and observation copied there,

And thy commandment all alone shall live

Within the book and volume of my brain,

Unmix'd with baser matter. Yes, by heaven!

O most pernicious woman! 105

O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!

My tables! Meet it is I set it down

That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;

At least I am sure it may be so in Denmark.

[*Writes.*]

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word:

110

It is 'Adieu, adieu! Remember me.'

I have sworn't.

Hor. (within) My lord, my lord!

Enter *Horatio* and *Marcellus*.

Mar. Lord Hamlet!

Hor. Heaven secure him!

Ham. So be it!

Mar. Illo, ho, ho, my lord! 115

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! Come, bird, come.

Mar. How is't, my noble lord?

Hor. What news, my lord?

Ham. O, wonderful!

Hor. Good my lord, tell it.

Ham. No, you will reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven!

Mar. Nor I, my lord. 120

Ham. How say you then? Would heart of man once
think it?

But you'll be secret?

Both. Ay, by heaven, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark
But he's an arrant knave.

Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave
To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right! You are in the right! 126
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part;
You, as your business and desires shall point you,
For every man hath business and desire, 130
Such as it is; and for my own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray.

Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, faith, heartily

Hor. There's no offence, my lord. 135

Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,

And much offence too Touching this vision here,
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster't as you may And now, good friends, 140
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request

Hor. What is't, my lord? We will

Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-night.

Both. My lord, we will not

Ham. Nay, but swear't

Hor. In faith, 145

My lord, not I

Mar. Nor I, my lord—in faith.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost cries under the stage

Ghost. Swear.

Ham. Aha boy, say'st thou so? Art thou there, truepenny?
Come on! You hear this fellow in the cellarage 151
Consent to swear.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen.

Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*beneath*] Swear. 155

Ham. Hic et ubique? Then we'll shift our ground.

Come hither, gentlemen,

And lay your hands again upon my sword

Never to speak of this that you have heard.

Swear by my sword. 160

Ghost. [*beneath*] Swear by his sword

Ham. Well said, old mole! Canst work i' th' earth so fast?
A worthy pioner! Once more remove, good friends.

Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome. 165
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy
But come!

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd so'er I bear myself 170
(As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on),

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumb'ed thus, or this head-shake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase, 175
As 'Well, well, we know,' or 'We could, an if we would,'
Or 'If we list to speak,' or 'There be, an if they might,'
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me—this not to do,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you, 180
Swear.

Ghost. [*beneath*] Swear.

[*They swear.*]

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you;
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is 185
May do t' express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint. O cursed spite
That ever I was born to set it right! 190
Nay, come, let's go together.

Exeunt.

Enter *Polonius* and *Reynaldo*.

Pol Give him this money and these notes, *Reynaldo*.

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvell's wisely, good *Reynaldo*,
Before you visit him, to make inquire
Of his behaviour.

Rey. My lord, I did intend it. 5

Pol. Marry, well said, very well said. Look you, sir,
Enquire me first what *Danishers* are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expense; and finding
By this encompassment and drift of question 10
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it.
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him;
As thus, 'I know his father and his friends,
And in part him.' Do you mark this, *Reynaldo*? 15

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.

Pol. 'And in part him, but,' you may say, 'not well.
But if't be he I mean, he's very wild
Addicted so and so'; and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank 20
As may dishonour him—take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my lord.

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling, 25
Drabbing. You may go so far.

Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. Faith, no, as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put another scandal on him,

That he is open to incontinency. 30

That's not my meaning. But breathe his faults so quaintly

That they may seem the taints of liberty,

The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,

A savageness in unreclaimed blood,

Of general assault.

Rey. But, my good lord— 35

Pol. Wherefore should you do this?

Rey. Ay, my lord,

I would know that.

Pol. Marry, sir, here's my drift,

And I believe it is a fetch of warrant.

You laying these slight sullies on^a my son

As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' th' working, 40

Mark you,

Your party in converse, him you would sound,

Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes

The youth you breathe of guilty, be assur'd

He closes with you in this consequence: 45

'Good sir,' or so, or 'friend,' or 'gentleman'—

According to the phrase or the addition

Of man and country—

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, sir, does 'a this—'a does—What was I about
to say? By the mass, I was about to say something! Where
did I leave? 51

Rey. At 'closes in the consequence,' at 'friend or so,' and
'gentleman.'

Pol. At 'closes in the consequence'—Ay, marry!
He closes thus: 'I know the gentleman. 55

I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,

Or then, or then, with such or such, and, as you say,

There was 'a gaming; there o'ertook in's rouse;

There falling out at tennis'; or perchance,

'I saw him enter such a house of sale,' 60
Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth.

See you now—

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth;
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlasses and with assays of bias, 65
By indirections find directions out.

So, by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son You have me, have you not?

Rey My lord, I have

Pol God b' wi' ye, fare ye well!

Rey. Good my lord! [Going.] 70

Pol Observe his inclination in yourself.

Rey I shall, my lord

Pol. And let him ply his music

Rey. Well, my lord

Pol. Farewell!

Exit Reynaldo.

Enter Ophelia.

How now, Ophelia? What's the matter?

Oph. O my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted! 75

Pol. With what, i' th' name of God?

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd,
No hat upon his head, his stockings foul'd,
Ungart'ed, and down-gyved to his ankle; 80
Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,
And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors—he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My lord, I do not know, 85
But truly I do fear it.

Pol. What said he ?

Oph. He took me by the wrist and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face 90
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so.
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk 95
And end his being. That done, he lets me go,
And with his head over his shoulder turn'd
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes,
For out o' doors he went without their help
And to the last bended their light on me. 100

Pol. Come, go with me. I will go seek the King.
This is the very ecstasy of love,
Whose violent property fordoes itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings
As oft as any passion under heaven 105
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.
What, have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord, but, as you did command,
I did repel his letters and denied
His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad. 110
I am sorry that with better heed and judgment
I had not quoted him. I fear'd he did but trifle
And meant to wrack thee; but beshrew my jealousy!
By heaven, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions 115
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the King.
This must be known; which, being kept close, might move

More grief to hide than hate to utter love. 119
Come.

Exeunt

Scene II. [*Elsinore. A room in the Castle*]

Flourish Enter *King* and *Queen*, *Rosencrantz*, and *Guildenstern*, cum aliis.

King. Welcome, dear *Rosencrantz* and *Guildenstern*.
Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need we have to use you did provoke
Our hasty sending Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation? So I call it, 5
Sith nor th' exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from th' understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of. I entreat you both 10
That, being of so young days brought up with him,
And since so neighbour'd to his youth and haviour,
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time, so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather 15
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you,
And sure I am two men there are not living 20
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry and good will
As to expend your time with us awhile
For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks 25
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your Majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Gul. But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent, 30
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz.
And I beseech you instantly to visit 35
My too much changed son — Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Gul. Heavens make our presence and our practices
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. Ay, amen!

Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, [with some At-
tendants].

Enter Polonius.

Pol. Th' ambassadors from Norway, my good lord, 40
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good nēws.

Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty as I hold my soul,
Both to my God and to my gracious king; 45
And I do think—or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath us'd to do—that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy

King. O, speak of that! That do I long to hear. 50

Pol. Give first admittance to th' ambassadors.
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.

[Exit Polonius.]

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper. 55

Queen. I doubt it is no other but the main,
His father's death and our o'erhasty marriage.

King Well, we shall sift him

Enter Polonius, Voltmand, and Cornelius.

Welcome, my good friends.

Say, Voltmand, what from our brother Norway?

Volt. Most fair return of greetings and desires. 60

Upon our first, he sent out to suppress

His nephew's levies, which to him appear'd

To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack,

But better look'd into, he truly found

It was against your Highness, whereat griev'd, 65

That so his sickness, age, and impotence

Was falsely borne in hand, sends out arrests

On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys,

Receives rebuke from Norway, and, in fine,

Makes vow before his uncle never more 70

To give th' assay of arms against your Majesty.

Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,

Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee

And his commission to employ those soldiers,

So levied as before, against the Polack; 75

With an entreaty, herein further shown,

[*Gives a paper.*]

That it might please you to give quiet pass

Through your dominions for this enterprise,

On such regards of safety and allowance

As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well; 80

And at our more consider'd time we'll read,

Answer, and think upon this business.

Meantime we thank you for your well-took labour.

Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together.

Most welcome home!

Exeunt Ambassadors.

Pol.

This business is well ended.

85

My liege, and madam, to expostulate

What majesty should be, what duty is,

Why day is day, night night, and time is time,

Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.

Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,

90

And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,

I will be brief. Your noble son is mad.

Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,

What is't but to be nothing else but mad?

But let that go.

Queen.

More matter, with less art.

95

Pol. Madam, I swear I use no art at all

That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true 'tis pity;

And pity 'tis 'tis true. A foolish figure!

But farewell it, for I will use no art.

Mad let us grant him then. And now remains

100

That we find out the cause of this effect—

Or rather say, the cause of this defect,

For this effect defective comes by cause.

Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.

Perpend.

105

I have a daughter (have while she is mine),

Who in her duty and obedience, mark,

Hath given me this. Now gather, and surmise.

[Reads] the letter.

'To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia,'—

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase, 'beautified' is a vile phrase.

But you shall hear. Thus

[Reads.]

'In her excellent white bosom, these, &c.'

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her ?

Pol. Good madam, stay awhile. I will be faithful. [*Reads.*]

'Doubt thou the stars are fire; 116

Doubt that the sun doth move;

Doubt truth to be a liar,

But never doubt I love.

'O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have not art to reckon my groans; but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.

'Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, HAMLET.'

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me; 125

And more above, hath his solicitings,

As they fell out by time, by means, and place,

All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she

Receiv'd his love ?

Pol. What do you think of me ?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable. 130

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think,

When I had seen this hot love on the wing

(As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,

Before my daughter told me), what might you,

Or my dear Majesty your queen here, think, 135

If I had play'd the desk or table book,

Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb,

Or look'd upon this love with idle sight ?

What might you think ? No, I went round to work

And my young mistress thus I did bespeak : 140

'Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star

This must not be.' And then I prescripts gave her,

That she should lock herself from his resort,

Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.

Which done, she took the fruits of my advice, 145

And he, repulsed, a short tale to make,
Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,
Thence to a lightness, and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves, 150
And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think 'tis this?

Queen. It may be, very like

Pol. Hath there been such a time—I would fain know
that—

That I have positively said 'Tis so,
When it prov'd otherwise?

King. Not that I know. 155

Pol. [*points to his head and shoulder*] Take this from this,
if this be otherwise.

If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

King. How may we try it further? 159

Pol. You know sometimes he walks four hours together
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him.
Be you and I behind an arras then.

Mark the encounter. If he love her not,
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon, 165
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm and carters.

King. We will try it.

Enter *Hamlet*, reading on a book.

Queen. But look where sadly the poor wretch comes read-
ing.

Pol. Away, I do beseech you, both away!

I'll board him presently. O, give me leave. 170

Exeunt King and Queen, [with Attendants].

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Ham. Well, God-a-mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well. You are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord. 175

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir To be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man pick'd out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord. 180

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god kissing carrion—Have you a daughter?

Pol. I have, my lord. 184

Ham. Let her not walk i' th' sun Conception is a blessing, but not as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to't

Pol. [*aside*] How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter. Yet he knew me not at first. He said I was a fishmonger. He is far gone, far gone! And truly in my youth I suff'ered much extremity for love—very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my lord? 195

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord

Ham. Slanders, sir, for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards; that their faces are wrinkled; their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams. All which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for you yourself, sir, should be old as I am if, like a crab, you could go backward.

Pol. [*aside*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in't.—Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave? 210

Pol. Indeed, that is out o' th' air [*Aside*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of I will leave him and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you. 218

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal—except my life, except my life, except my life.

^
Enter *Rosencrantz* and *Guildestern*.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Pol. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet. There he is.

Ros. [*to Polonius*] God save you, sir! 225

Exit [*Polonius*].

Guil. My honour'd lord!

Ros. My most dear lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both? 230

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy in that we are not over-happy.

On Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord. 235

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?

Guil. Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of Fortune? O, most true! she is a strumpet. What news? 240

Ros. None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near! But your news is not true. Let me question more in particular. What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune that she sends you to prison hither?

Gul. Prison, my lord?

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

Ros. Then is the world one. 250

Ham. A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one o' th' worst.

Ros. We think not so, my lord 254

Ham. Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so. To me it is a prison.

Ros. Why, then your ambition makes it one. 'Tis too narrow for your mind. 259

Ham. O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

Gul. Which dreams indeed are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream. 265

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretch'd heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to th' court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason. 272

Both. We'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter! I will not sort you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion. 279

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you; and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a

halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me. Come, come! Nay, speak. 285

Gul. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Why, anything—but to th' purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour. I know the good King and Queen have sent for you. 291

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no. 299

Ros. [*aside to Guildenstern*] What say you?

Ham. [*aside*] Nay then, I have an eye of you.—If you love me, hold not off.

Gul. My lord, we were sent for. 303

Ham. I will tell you why. So shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the King and Queen moult no feather. I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire—why, it appeareth no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals! And yet to me what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me—no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts 325

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said 'Man delights not me'?

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you. We coted them on the way, and hither are they coming to offer you service. 331

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome—his Majesty shall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' th' sere; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't. What players are they? 340

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it they travel? Their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways. 345

Ros. I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so follow'd? 350

Ros. No indeed are they not.

Ham. How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace; but there is, sir, an eyrie of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question and are most tyrannically clapp'd for't. These are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages (so they call them) that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goosequills and dare scarce come thither. 360

Ham. What, are they children? Who maintains 'em? How are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? Will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players (as it is most like, if their

means are no better), their writers do them wrong to make them exclaim against their own succession 368

Ros. Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy. There was, for a while, no money bid for argument unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is't possible? 374

Gul. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord—Hercules and his load too.

Ham. It is not very strange; for my uncle is King of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father lived give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred ducats apiece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out. 385

Flourish for the Players.

Gul. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore Your hands, come! Th' appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony. Let me comply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players (which I tell you must show fairly outwards) should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome. But my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceiv'd.

Gul. In what, my dear lord? 395

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west. When the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

Enter Polonius.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern—and you too—at each ear a hearer! That great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling clouts. 401

Ros. Happily he's the second time come to them; for they say an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players. Mark it.—You say right, sir, a Monday morning; 'twas so indeed.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome— 410

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buzz, buzz!

Pol. Upon my honour—

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass—

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral; scene indivisible, or poem unlimited. Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men

Ham. O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why, 425

'One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he loved passing well.'

Pol. [*aside*] Still on my daughter.

Ham. Am I not i' th' right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well. 431

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows then, my lord?

Ham. Why,

'As by lot, God wot,' 435

and then, you know,

'It came to pass, as most like it was'

The first row of the pious chanson will show you more; for
look where my abridgment comes. 439

Enter four or five *Players*.

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all.—I am glad to see thee well.—Welcome, good friends.—O, my old friend? Why, thy face is valanc'd since I saw thee last. Com'st thou to beard me in Denmark?—What, my young lady and mistress? By'r Lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not crack'd within the ring.—Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at anything we see. We'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality. Come, a passionate speech. 452

1. *Play*. What speech, my good lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted; or if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleas'd not the million, 'twas caviary to the general, but it was (as I receiv'd it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine) an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation; but call'd it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in't I chiefly lov'd. 'Twas Æneas' tale to Dido, and thereabout of it especially where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line—let me see, let me see: 471

'The rugged Pyrrhus, like th' Hyrcanian beast—'

'Tis not so; it begins with Pyrrhus:

'The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble 475
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd
With heraldry more dismal Head to foot
Now is he total gules, horribly trick'd
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons, 480
Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and a damned light
To their lord's murder. Roasted in wrath and fire,
And thus o'ersized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus 485
Old grandsire Priam seeks.'

So, proceed you.

Pol. Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good accent and good discretion.

1 Play. 'Anon he finds him, 490
Striking too short at Greeks. His antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command Unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide,
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword 495
Th' unnerved father falls Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear. For lo! his sword,
Which was declining on the milky head 500
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' th' air to stick.
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,
And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.
But, as we often see, against some storm, 505
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death—anon the dreadful thunder

Doth rend the region; so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
Aroused vengeance sets him new awork; 510
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.
Out, out, thou strumpet Fortune! All you gods, 515
In general synod take away her power,
Break all the spokes and felines from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!'

Pol. This is too long 520

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—Prithee
say on. He's for a jig or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps. Say on;
come to Hecuba.

I. Play. 'But who, O who, had seen the mobled queen—'

Ham. 'The mobled queen'? 526

Pol. That's good! 'Mobled queen' is good.

I. Play. 'Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning the flames
With bisson rheum, a clout upon that head
Where late the diadem stood, and for a robe, 530
About her lank and all o'erteemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up—
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd.
But if the gods themselves did see her then, 535
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamour that she made
(Unless things mortal move them not at all)
Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven 540
And passion in the gods.'

Pol. Look, wher he has not turn'd his colour, and has tears
in's eyes. Prithee no more!

Ham. 'Tis well. I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon — Good my lord, will you see the players well bestow'd? Do you hear? Let them be well us'd; for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time. After your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live. 551

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. God's bodykins, man, much better! Use every man after his desert, and who should scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity. The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs. 559

Ham. Follow him, friends. We'll hear a play to-morrow.

Exeunt Polonius and Players [except the First].
Dost thou hear me, old friend? Can you play 'The Murther of Gonzago'?

I. Play. Ay, my lord. 564

Ham. We'll ha't to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines which I would set down and insert in't, could you not?

I. Play. Ay, my lord. 569

Ham. Very well. Follow that lord—and look you mock him not. [*Exit First Player*] My good friends, I'll leave you till night. You are welcome to Elsinore.

Ros. Good my lord!

Ham. Ay, so, God b' wi' ye!

Exeunt [Rosencrantz and Guildenstern].

Now I am alone. 575

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!

Is it not monstrous that this player here,

But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,

Could force his soul so to his own conceit

That, from her working, all his visage wann'd, 580

Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect.

A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit ? And all for nothing !
For Hecuba !
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba, 585
That he should weep for her ? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have ? He would drown the stage with tears
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech ;
Make mad the guilty and appal the free, 590
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears.
Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause, 595
And can say nothing ! No, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward ?
Who calls me villain ? breaks my pate across ?
Plucks off my beard and blows it in my face ? 600
Tweaks me by th' nose ? gives me the lie i' th' throat
As deep as to the lungs ? Who does me this, ha ?
'Swounds, I should take it ! for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-liver'd and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or ere this 605
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain !
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain !
O, vengeance !
Why, what an ass am I ! This is most brave, 610
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must (like a whore) unpack my heart with words
And fall a-cursing like a very drab,
A scullion ! 615

Fie upon't! foh! About, my brain! Hum, I have heard
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions; 620
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick. If he but blench, 625
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be a devil; and the devil hath power
T' assume a pleasing shape, yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits, 630
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative than this. The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King. *Exit.*

Enter *King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and Lords.*

King. And can you by no drift of circumstance
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess he feels himself distracted, 5
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,
But with a crafty madness keeps aloof
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well? 10

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition

Ros. Niggard of question, but of our demands
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime? 15

Ros. Madam, it so fell out that certain players,
We o'erraught on the way. Of these we told him,
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it. They are here about the court,
And, as I think, they have already order 20
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true;
And he beseech'd me to entreat your Majesties
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart, and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclin'd 25
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord.

Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;

For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia 30

Her father and myself (lawful espials)
Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge
And gather by him, as he is behav'd, 35
If't be th' affliction of his love, or no,
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you;
And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness So shall I hope your virtues 40
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may.

[Exit Queen]

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here.—Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves.—[To Ophelia] Read on this
book,

That show of such an exercise may colour 45
Your loneliness.—We are oft to blame in this,
'Tis too much prov'd, that with devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. [aside] O, 'tis too true!
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience! 50
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plast'ring art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted word.
O heavy burthen!

Pol I hear him coming. Let's withdraw, my lord. 55

Exeunt [King and Polonius].

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. To be, or not to be—that is the question :
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die—to sleep— 60
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die—to sleep.
To sleep—perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub! 65
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life.
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time, 70
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th' unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make 75
With a bare bodkin? Who would these fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death—
The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns—puzzles the will, 80
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought. 85

And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action.—Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia!—Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins rememb'ed.

Oph. Good my lord, 90

How does your honour for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours
That I have longed long to re-deliver.
I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I! 95

I never gave you aught. •

Oph. My honour'd lord, you know right well you did,
And with them words of so sweet breath compos'd
As made the things more rich. Their perfume lost,
Take these again, for to the noble mind 100
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! Are you honest?

Oph. My lord?

Ham. Are you fair? 105

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should
admit no discourse to your beauty.

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than
with honesty? 110

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner trans-
form honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of
honesty can translate beauty into his likeness. This was some-
time a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love
you once. 116

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believ'd me; for virtue cannot

so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it. I loved you not. 120

Oph. I was the more deceived

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery! Why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest, but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do, crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father? 134

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool nowhere but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens! 138

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery. Go, farewell. Or if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Farewell. 146

Oph. O heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough. God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another. You jig, you amble, and you lisp; you nickname God's creatures and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't! it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages. Those that are married already—all but one—shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go.

Exit.

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!

The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, tongue, sword,
Th' expectancy and rose of the fair state,

160

The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
Th' observ'd of all observers—quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason, 165
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth
Blasted with ecstasy. O, woe is me
T' have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Enter King and Polonius.

King. Love[?] his affections do not that way tend; 170
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger; which for to prevent, 175
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down. he shall with speed to England
For the demand of our neglected tribute.
Haply the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel 180
This something-settled matter in his heart,
Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?
Pol. It shall do well But yet do I believe
The origin and commencement of his grief 185
Sprung from neglected love—How now, Ophelia?
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said.
We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please;
But if you hold it fit, after the play
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him 190
To show his grief. Let her be round with him;

And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference. If she find him not,
To England send him; or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so. 195
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go. *Exeunt.*

[Scene II. *Elsinore* A hall in the Castle.]

Enter *Hamlet* and three of the *Players*.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray³ you, as I pronounc'd it to you, trippingly on the tongue. But if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as live the town crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who (for the most part) are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows and noise. I would have such a fellow whipp'd for o'erdoing Termagant. It out-herods Herod. Pray you avoid it. 16

Player. I warrant your honour

Ham. Be not too tame neither; but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone,

or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve, the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly (not to speak it profanely), that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of Nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

Player. I hope we have reform'd that indifferently with us, sir. 41

Ham. O, reform it altogether! And let those that play your clowns speak no more than 's set down for them. For there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered That's villanous and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go make you ready. 50

Exeunt Players

Enter Polonius, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern

How now, my lord? Will the King hear this piece of work?

Pol. And the Queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste. (*Exit Polonius.*) Will you two help to hasten them?

Both. We will, my lord.

Exeunt they two.

Ham. What, ho, Horatio!

Enter Horatio.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal. 60

Hor. O, my dear lord!

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter;

For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp, 65
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself. For thou hast been 70
As one, in suff'ring all, that suffers nothing;
A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks, and blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger 75
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee. Something too much of this!
There is a play to-night before the King. 80
One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
Which I have told thee, of my father's death.
I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe my uncle. If his occulted guilt 85
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face, 90
And after we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord

If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Sound a flourish. Enter Trumpets and Kettledrums. Danish march. Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and other Lords attendant, with the Guard carrying torches.

Ham. They are coming to the play. I must be idle. 95
Get you a place.

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, I' faith, of the chameleon's dish. I eat the
air, promise-cramm'd. You cannot feed capons so. 100

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet. These
words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now. [*To Polonius*] My lord, you
play'd once i' th' university, you say?

Pol. That did I, my lord, and was accounted a good
actor. 106

Ham. What did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar; I was kill'd i' th' Capitol;
Brutus kill'd me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf
there. Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord. They stay upon your patience

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me. 115

Ham. No, good mother. Here's metal more attractive.

Pol. [*to the King*] O, ho! do you mark that?

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[*Sits down at Ophelia's feet.*]

Oph. No, my lord. 120

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Do you think I meant country matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my lord.

Ham. That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs. 126

Oph. What is, my lord?

Ham Nothing.

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

130

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O God, your only jig-maker! What should a man do but be merry? For look you how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within 's two hours.

135

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year. But, by'r Lady, he must build churches then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is, 'For O, for O, the hobby-horse is forgot!'

145

Hautboys play. The dumb show enters.

Enter a *King* and a *Queen* very lovingly; the *Queen* embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck. He lays him down upon a bank of flowers. She, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, pours poison in the sleeper's ears, and leaves him. The *Queen* returns, finds the *King* dead, and makes passionate action. The *Poisoner* with some three or four *Mutes*, come in again, seem to condole with her. The dead body is carried away. The *Poisoner* woos the *Queen* with gifts; she seems harsh and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.

Exeunt.

Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry, this is mitching malhecho; it means mischief.

Oph. Belike this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter *Prologue*.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow. The players cannot
keep counsel; they'll tell all 152

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you'll show him. Be not you
asham'd to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught! I'll mark the play.

Pro. For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency, 160
We beg your hearing patiently. [Exit.]

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord."

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter [two *Players* as] *King* and *Queen*.

King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round 165
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground,
And thirty dozen moons with borrowed sheen
About the world have times twelve thirties been,
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite comutual in most sacred bands. 170

Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!
But woe is me! you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust, 175
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must;
For women's fear and love holds quantity,
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now what my love is, proof hath made you know;
And as my love is siz'd, my fear is so 180
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

King. Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;
My operant powers their functions leave to do.

And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, below'd, and haply one as kind
For husband shalt thou— 185

Queen. O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast.
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second but who killed the first. 190

Ham. [*aside*] Wormwood, wormwood!

Queen. The instances that second marriage move
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love.
A second time I kill my husband dead
When second husband kisses me in bed. 195

King. I do believe you think what now you speak;
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity;
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree, 200
But fall unshaken when they mellow be.

Most necessary 'tis that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt.
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose. 205

The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy.
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye, nor 'tis not strange 210
That even our loves should with our fortunes change;

For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark his favourite flies,
The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies; 215

And hitherto doth love on fortune tend,
For who not needs shall never lack a friend,
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.

But, orderly to end where I begun, 220
Our wills and fates do so contrary run
That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own
So think thou wilt no second husband wed,
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead 225
Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light,
Sport and repose lock from me day and night,
To desperation turn my trust and hope,
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope,
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy 230
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy,
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now!

King. 'Tis deeply sworn Sweet, leave me here awhile. 235
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep.

Queen. Sleep rock thy brain,

[*He*] sleeps

And never come mischance between us twain!

Exit.

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks. 240

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence
in't?

Ham. No, no! They do but jest, poison in jest; no offence
i' th' world. 245

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. 'The Mousetrap' Marry, how? Tropically This
play is the image of a murder done in Vienna Gonzago is
the duke's name; his wife, Baptista. You shall see anon. 'Tis
a knavish piece of work; but what o' that? Your Majesty,

and we that have free souls, it touches us not. Let the gall'd jade winch; our withers are unwrung.

Enter *Lucianus*.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the King.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord. 255

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better, and worse. 261

Ham. So you must take your husbands.—Begin, murderer. Pox, leave thy damnable faces, and begin! Come, the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge. 265

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property 270
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

Pours the poison in his ears.

Ham. He poisons him i' th' garden for's estate. His name's Gonzago. The story is extant, and written in very choice Italian. You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife. 275

Oph. The King rises.

Ham. What, frighted with false fire?

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light! Away! 280

All. Lights, lights, lights!

Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.

Ham. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play;

For some must watch, while some must sleep:

Thus runs the world away. 285

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers—if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me—with two Provincial roses on my raz'd shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

Hor. Half a share. 290

Ham. A whole one I!

For thou dost know, O Damon dear,

This realm dismantled was

Of Jove himself, and now reigns here

A very, very—pajock. 295

Hor. You might have rhym'd.

Ham. O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound! Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning? 300

Hor. I did very well note him

Ham. Aha! Come, some music! Come, the recorders!

For if the King like not the comedy,

Why then, belike he likes it not, perdy.

Come, some music! 306

Enter *Rosencrantz* and *Guildestern*.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The King, sir— 310

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is in his retirement, marvellous distemper'd.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord; rather with choler. 315

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to the doctor, for for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler. 319

Gul. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir; pronounce.

Gul. The Queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome. 325

Gul. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment; if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot. 331

Gul. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased. But, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or rather, as you say, my mother. Therefore no more, but to the matter! My mother, you say— 337

Ros. Then thus she says: your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so stonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet ere you go to bed. 344

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still, by these pickers and stealers! 349

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? You do surely bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement 354

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the King himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, sir, but 'while the grass grows'—the proverb is something musty. 359

Enter the *Players* with recorders.

O, the recorders! Let me see one. To withdraw with you—why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe? 366

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you. 370

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. It is as easy as lying. Govern these ventages with your fingers and thumbs, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops. 376

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony. I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be play'd on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.

Enter *Polonius*.

God bless you, sir! 390

Pol. My lord, the Queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By th' mass, and 'tis like a camel indeed. 395

Ham. Methinks it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is back'd like a weasel.

Ham. Or like a whale.

Pol. Very like a whale. 399

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by-and-by.—They fool me to the top of my bent.—I will come by-and-by.

Pol. I will say so. *Exit.*

Ham. 'By-and-by' is easily said.—Leave me, friends. 405

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*]

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot blood
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother! 410
O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom.
Let me be cruel, not unnatural;
I will speak daggers to her, but use none.
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites— 415
How in my words somever she be shent,
To give them seals never, my soul, consent! *Exit.*

[Scene III. *A room in the Castle.*]

Enter *King*, *Rosencrantz*, and *Guildestern*.

King. I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
And he to England shall along with you.
The terms of our estate may not endure 5

Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.

Guil. We will ourselves provide.
Most holy and religious fear it is
To keep those many many bodies safe
That live and feed upon your Majesty 10

Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound
With all the strength and armour of the mind
To keep itself from noyance; but much more
That spirit upon whose weal depends and rests 15
The lives of many The cesse of majesty
Dies not alone, but like a gulf doth draw
What's near it with it. It is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortis'd and adjoin'd; which when it falls, 20
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boist'rous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
For we will fetters put upon this fear, 25
Which now goes too free-footed.

Both. We will haste us.

Exeunt Gentlemen.

Enter Polonius.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet.
Behind the arras I'll convey myself
To hear the process. I'll warrant she'll tax him home;
And, as you said, and wisely was it said, 30
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege.

I'll call upon you ere you go to bed
And tell you what I know.

King.

Thanks, dear my lord.

35

Exit [Polonius].

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murther! Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will.
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent, 40
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens 45
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what's in prayer but this twofold force,
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd being down? Then I'll look up, 50
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murther'?
That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murther—
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen. 55
May one be pardon'd and retain th' offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law; but 'tis not so above. 60
There is no shuffling; there the action lies
In his true nature, and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? What rests?
Try what repentance can. What can it not? 65

Yet what can it when one cannot repent ?
O wretched state ! O bosom black as death !
O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engag'd ! Help, angels ! Make assay.
Bow, stubborn knees ; and heart with strings of steel, 70
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe !
All may be well *He kneels.*

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying,
And now I'll do't. And so he goes to heaven,
And so am I reveng'd That would be scann'd. 75
A villain kills my father ; and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven
Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge !
He took my father grossly, full of bread, 80
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May ;
And how his audit stands, who knows save heaven ?
But in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him ; and am I then reveng'd,
To take him in the purging of his soul, 85
When he 's fit and seasoned for his passage ?
No.
Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent
When he is drunk asleep ; or in his rage ;
Or in th' incestuous pleasure of his bed, 90
At gaming, swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't—
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays 95
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days *Exit.*
King. [*rises*] My words fly up, my thoughts remain below.
Words without thoughts never to heaven go *Exit.*

[Scene IV. *The Queen's closet.*]Enter *Queen* and *Polonius*.

Pol. He will come straight Look you lay home to him.
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your Grace hath screen'd and stood between
Much heat and him. I'll silence me even here.
Pray you be round with him. 5

Ham. (*within*) Mother, mother, mother!

Queen. I'll warrant you; fear me not. Withdraw; I hear
him coming.

[*Polonius hides behind the arras.*]Enter *Hamlet*.*Ham.* Now, mother, what's the matter?*Queen.* Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.*Ham.* Mother, you have my father much offended 10*Queen.* Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.*Ham.* Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.*Queen.* Why, how now, Hamlet?*Ham.* What's the matter now?*Queen.* Have you forgot me?*Ham.* No, by the rood, not so!

You are the Queen, your husband's brother's wife, 15
And (would it were not so!) you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down. You shall not budge!
You go not till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you. 20

Queen. What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murder me?
Help, help, ho!

Pol. [*behind*] What, ho! help, help, help!*Ham.* [*draws*] How now? a rat? Dead for a ducat, dead![*Makes a pass through the arras and kills Polonius.*]

Pol. [*behind*] O, I am slain!

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not. Is it the King? 25

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed—almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king?

Ham. Ay, lady, it was my word. 30

[*Lifts up the arras and sees Polonius.*]

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

I took thee for thy better. Take thy fortune.

Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.

Leave wringing of your hands. Peace! sit you down

And let me wring your heart; for so I shall 35

If it be made of penetrable stuff;

If damned custom have not braz'd it so

That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done that thou dar'st wag thy
tongue

In noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act 40

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;

Calls virtue hypocrite; takes off the rose

From the fair forehead of an innocent love,

And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows

As false as dicers' oaths. O, such a deed 45

As from the body of contraction plucks

The very soul, and sweet religion makes

A rhapsody of words! Heaven's face doth glow;

Yea, this solidity and compound mass,

With tristful visage, as against the doom, 50

Is thought-sick at the act.

Queen. Ay me, what act,

That roars so loud and thunders in the index?

Ham. Look here upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers. . 55
See what a grace was seated on this brow,
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury
New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill:
A combination and a form indeed 60
Where every god did seem to set his seal
To give the world assurance of a man.
This was your husband Look you now what follows.
Here is your husband, like a mildew'd ear
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes? 65
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for at your age
The heyday in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment; and what judgment 70
Would step from this to this? Sense sure you have,
Else could you not have motion; but sure that sense
Is apoplex'd; for madness would not err,
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd
But it reserv'd some quantity of choice 75
To serve in such a difference. What devil was't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense 80
Could not so mope.
O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax
And melt in her own fire Proclaim no shame 85
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,

Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
And reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more!
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul,
And there I see such black and grained spots 90
As will not leave their tinct.

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,
Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love
Over the nasty sty!

Queen. O, speak to me no more!
These words like daggers enter in mine ears. 95
No more, sweet Hamlet! •

Ham. A murderer and a villain!
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings;
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole 100
And put it in his pocket!

Queen. No more!

Enter the *Ghost* in his nightgown.

Ham. A king of shreds and patches!—
Save me and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! What would your gracious figure?

Queen. Alas, he's mad! 105

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
Th' important acting of your dread command?
O, say!

Ghost. Do not forget. This visitation 110
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But look, amazement on thy mother sits.
O, step between her and her fighting soul!

Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works.

Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady? 115

Queen. Alas, how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with th' incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in th' alarm, 120
Your bedded hairs, like life in excrements,
Start up and stand an end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience! Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him, on him! Look you how pale he glares! 125
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable—Do not look upon me,
Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects. Then what I have to do
Will want true colour—tears perchance for blood. 130

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there! Look how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he liv'd! 135
Look where he goes even now out at the portal!

Exit Ghost.

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain.
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy?

My pulse as yours doth temperately keep time 140
And makes as healthful music. It is not madness
That I have utt' red. Bring me to the test,

And I the matter will reword, which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul, 145
That not your trespass but my madness speaks.
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven,
Repent what's past; avoid what is to come; 150
And do not spread the compost on the weeds
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue;
For in the fatness of these pursy times
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg—
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good. 155
Queen. O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.
Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half
Good night—but go not to my uncle's bed.
Assume a virtue, if you have it not. 160
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habits evil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night, 165
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence; the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either [master] the devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night; 170
And when you are desirous to be blest,
I'll blessing beg of you —For this same lord,
I do repent; but heaven hath pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister. 175
I will bestow him, and will answer well

The death I gave him. So again, good night.
I must be cruel, only to be kind;
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.
One word more, good lady.

Queen. What shall I do? 180

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat King tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers, 185
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft 'Twere good you let him know;
For who that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib, 190
Such dear concernings hide? Who would do so?
No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and like the famous ape,
To try conclusions, in the basket creep 195
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England; you know that?

Queen. Alack, 200
I had forgot! 'Tis so concluded on.

Ham. There's letters seal'd; and my two schoolfellows,
Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work; 205
For 'tis the sport to have the engineer
Hoist with his own petar; and 't shall go hard
But I will delve one yard below their mines

And blow them at the moon. O, 'tis most sweet
When in one line two crafts directly meet. 210
This man shall set me packing.
I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.—
Mother, good night.—Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave. 215
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.
Good night, mother.

[*Exit the Queen. Then*] *exit Hamlet, tugging in*
Polonius.

[Act IV. Scene I. *Elsinore. A room in the Castle*]

Enter *King* and *Queen*, with *Rosencrantz* and *Guildestern*.

King. There's matter in these sighs. These profound heaves
You must translate; 'tis fit we understand them
Where is your son ?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildestern.*]

Ah, mine own lord, what have I seen to-night ! 5

King. What, Gertrude ? How does Hamlet ?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind when both contend
Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries 'A rat, a rat !' 10
And in this brainish apprehension kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed !
It had been so with us, had we been there.
His liberty is full of threats to all—
To you yourself, to us, to every one 15
Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answer'd ?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt
This mad young man But so much was our love
We would not understand what was most fit, 20
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life Where is he gone ?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd ;
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore 25
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure. He weeps for what is done

King. O Gertrude, come away !
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch

But we will ship him hence; and this vile deed 30
We must with all our majesty and skill
Both countenance and excuse. Ho, Guildenstern!

Enter *Rosencrantz* and *Guildenstern*.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid.
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him. 35
Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you haste in this

Exeunt [*Rosencrantz* and *Guildenstern*].

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends
And let them know both what we mean to do
And what's untimely done. [So haply slander—] 40
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports his pois'ned shot—may miss our name
And hit the woundless air.—O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay. 45

Exeunt.

[Scene II. *Elsinore*. *A passage in the Castle*]

Enter *Hamlet*.

Ham. Safely stow'd.

Gentlemen. (*within*) Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

Ham. But soft! What noise? Who calls on Hamlet? O,
here they come.

Enter *Rosencrantz* and *Guildenstern*

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin. 6

Ros. Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it thence
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what? 10

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not mine own.
Besides, to be demanded of a sponge, what replication should
be made by the son of a king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord? 15

Ham. Ay, sir; that soaks up the King's countenance, his
rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the King best
service in the end. He keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of
his jaw; first mouth'd, to be last swallowed. When he needs
what you have glean'd, it is but squeezing you and, sponge,
you shall be dry again.

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it. A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish
ear 25

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is and go
with us to the King.

Ham. The body is with the King, but the King is not with
the body. The King is a thing—

Gul. A thing, my lord?

Ham. Of nothing. Bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after.
Exeunt.

[Scene III. *Elsinore. A room in the Castle.*]

Enter *King*.

King. I have sent to seek him and to find the body.
How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!
Yet must not we put the strong law on him.
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;
And where 'tis so, th' offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,

This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause. Diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are reliev'd, 10
Or not at all.

Enter *Rosencrantz*.

How now? What hath befall'n?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us. 15

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! Bring in my lord.

Enter *Hamlet* and *Guildenstern* [with *Attendants*].

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper? Where? 19

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten. A certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet. We fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots. Your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service—two dishes, but to one table. That's the end

King. Alas, alas!

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm. 30

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius? 34

Ham. In heaven. Send thither to see. If your messenger find him not there, seek him i' th' other place yourself. But

indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. Go seek him there. [*To Attendants.*]

Ham. He will stay till you come.

41

[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—
Which we do tender as we dearly grieve

For that which thou hast done,—must send thee hence

With fiery quickness. Therefore prepare thyself.

45

The bark is ready and the wind at help,

Th' associates tend, and everything is bent

For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them. But come, for England!
Farewell, dear mother

51

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet

Ham. My mother! Father and mother is man and wife;
man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come, for
England!

Exit.

King. Follow him at foot, tempt him with speed aboard.
Delay it not; I'll have him hence to-night.

Away! for everything is seal'd and done

That else leans on th' affair. Pray you make haste.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,—

60

As my great power thereof may give thee sense,

Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red

After the Danish sword, and thy free awe

Pays homage to us,—thou mayst not coldly set

Our sovereign process, which imports at full,

65

By letters congruing to that effect,

The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England,
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me. Till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.

Exit.

[Scene IV Near Elsinore]

Enter *Fortinbras* with his *Army* over the stage

For. Go, Captain, from me greet the Danish king.
Tell him that by his license *Fortinbras*
Craves the conveyance of a promis'd march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his Majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye;
And let him know so.

5

Capt. I will do't, my lord.

For. Go softly on.

Exeunt [all but the Captain].

Enter *Hamlet*, *Rosencrantz*, [*Guildenstern*,] and others.

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?

Capt. They are of Norway, sir

10

Ham. How purpos'd, sir, I pray you?

Capt. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who commands them, sir?

Capt. The nephew to old Norway, *Fortinbras*.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?

15

Capt. Truly to speak, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

20

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Capt. Yes, it is already garrison'd.

Ham. Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats 25
Will not debate the question of this straw.

This is th' imposthume of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies.—I humbly thank you, sir.

Capt. God b' wi' you, sir. [Exit.]

Ros. Will't please you go, my lord?

Ham. I'll be with you straight. Go a little before. 31

[Exit all but Hamlet.]

How all occasions do inform against me
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more. 35
Sure he that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason
To fust in us unus'd. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple 40
Of thinking too precisely on th' event,—
A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom
And ever three parts coward,—I do not know
Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do,'
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means 45
To do't. Examples gross as earth exhort me
Witness this army of such mass and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince,
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,
Makes mouths at the invisible event, 50
Exposing what is mortal and unsure
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an eggshell. Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,

But greatly to find quarrel in a straw 55
 When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,
 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
 Excitements of my reason and my blood,
 And let all sleep, while to my shame I see
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men 60
 That for a fantasy and trick of fame
 Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
 Which is not tomb enough and continent
 To hide the slain? O, from this time forth, 65
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth! *Exit.*

[Scene V. *Elsinore. A room in the Castle.*]

Enter *Horatio, Queen, and a Gentleman.*

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Gent. She is importunate, indeed distract.
 Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have?

Gent. She speaks much of her father; says she hears
 There's tricks i' th' world, and hems, and beats her heart; 5
 Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt,
 That carry but half sense. Her speech is nothing,
 Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
 The hearers to collection; they aim at it,
 And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts; 10
 Which, as her winks and nods and gestures yield them,
 Indeed would make one think there might be thought,
 Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Hor. 'Twere good she were spoken with; for she may strew
 Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds. 15

Queen. Let her come in.

[*Exit Gentleman.*]

[*Aside*] To my sick soul (as sin's true nature is)

Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss.

So full of artless jealousy is guilt

It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

20

Enter *Ophelia* distracted.

Oph. Where is the beauteous Majesty of Denmark?

Queen. How now, *Ophelia*?

Oph. (*sings*)

How should I your true-love know

From another one?

By his cockle hat and staff

And his sandal shoon.

25

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

Oph. Say you? Nay, pray you mark.

(*Sings*) He is dead and gone, lady,

He is dead and gone;

At his head a grass-green turf,

At his heels a stone.

30

O, ho!

Queen. Nay, but *Ophelia*—

Oph. Pray you mark.

(*Sings*) White his shroud as the mountain snow—

35

Enter *King*.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord!

Oph. (*sings*)

Larded all with sweet flowers;

Which bewept to the grave did not go

With true-love showers.

King. How do you, pretty lady? 40

Oph. Well, God dild you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father. 45

Oph. Pray let's have no words of this; but when they ask you what it means, say you this:

(*Sings*) To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window, 50
To be your Valentine.

Then up he rose and donn'd his clo'es
And dupp'd the chamber door,
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more. 55

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, la, without an oath, I'll make an end on't!

[*Sings*] By Gis and by Saint Charity,
Alack, and fie for shame!
Young men will do't if they come to't. 60
By Cock, they are to blame.

Quoth she, 'Before you tumbled me,
You promis'd me to wed.'

He answers:

'So would I 'a' done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed.'

King. How long hath she been thus? 67

Oph. I hope all will be well. We must be patient; but I cannot choose but weep to think they would lay him i' th' cold ground. My brother shall know of it; and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies
Good night, sweet ladies. Good night, good night. *Exit*

King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you.

[*Exit Horatio.*]

O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs 76

All from her father's death O Gertrude, Gertrude,

When sorrows come, they come not single spies.

But in battalions! First, her father slain;

Next, your son gone, and he most violent author 80

Of his own just remove; the people muddied,

Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers

For good Polonius' death, and we have done but greenly

In hugger-mugger to inter him; poor Ophelia

Divided from herself and her fair judgment, 85

Without the which we are pictures or mere beasts;

Last, and as much containing as all these,

Her brother is in secret come from France;

Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,

And wants not buzzers to infect his ear, 90

With pestilent speeches of his father's death,

Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,

Will nothing stick our person to arraign

In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,

Like to a murd'ring piece, in many places 95

Gives me superfluous death.

A noise within.

Queen.

Alack, what noise is this?

King. Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door.

Enter a Messenger.

What is the matter?

Mess.

Save yourself, my lord:

The ocean, overpeering of his list,

Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste 100

Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,

O'rbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;

And, as the world were now but to begin,

Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word, 105
They cry 'Choose we! Laertes shall be king!'
Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the clouds,
'Laertes shall be king! Laertes king!'

A noise within.

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs! 110
King. The doors are broke.

Enter Laertes with others

Laer. Where is this king?—Sirs, stand you all without.
All. No, let's come in!
Laer. I pray you give me leave.
All. We will, we will!
Laer. I thank you. Keep the door. [*Exeunt his Followers.*]
O thou vile king, 115
Give me my father!

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.
Laer. That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me bastard;
Cries cuckold to my father; brands the harlot
Even here between the chaste unsmirched brows
Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes, 120
That thy rebellion looks so giantlike?
Let him go, Gertrude. Do not fear our person.
There's such divinity doth hedge a king
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes, 125
Why thou art thus incens'd. Let him go, Gertrude.
Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead

Queen. But not by him!

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with : 130
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes; only I'll be reveng'd 135
Most thoroughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

Laer. My will, not all the world!
And for my means, I'll husband them so well
They shall go far with little.

King. Good? Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty 140
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge
That swoopstake you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms 145
And, like the kind life-rend'ring pelican,
Repast them with my blood.

King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it, 150
It shall as level to your judgment pierce
As day does to your eye.

A noise within. 'Let her come in.'

Laer. How now? What noise is that?

Enter Ophelia.

O heat, dry up my brains! Tears seven times salt
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye! 155

By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!
O heavens! is't possible a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life? 164
Nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Oph. (sings)

They bore him barefac'd on the bier
(Hey non nony, nony, hey nony) 165
And in his grave rain'd many a tear.

Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus. 169

Oph. You must sing 'A-down a-down, and you call him
a-down-a.' O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward,
that stole his master's daughter

Laer. This nothing's more than matter. 174

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance. Pray you,
love, remember. And there is pansies, that's for thoughts

Laer. A document in madness! Thoughts and remembrance
fitted. 179

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines. There's
rue for you, and here's some for me. We may call it herb
of grace o' Sundays. O, you must wear your rue with a dif-
ference! There's a daisy. I would give you some violets, but
they wither'd all when my father died. They say he made a
good end. 186

[*Sings*] For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

Oph. (*sings*)

And will he not come again? 190

And will he not come again?

No, no, he is dead,

Go to thy deathbed,

He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow, 195

All flaxen was his poll

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan.

God 'a' mercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God b' wi' you. *Exit.*

Laer. Do you see this, O God? 201

King Laertes, I must commune with your grief,

Or you deny me right. Go but apart,

Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,

And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me. 205

If by direct or by collateral hand

They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,

Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,

To you in satisfaction; but if not,

Be you content to lend your patience to us, 210

And we shall jointly labour with your soul

To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so.

His means of death, his obscure funeral—

No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,

No noble rite nor formal ostentation,— 215

Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,

That I must call't in question.

King. So you shall,

And where th' offence is let the great axe fall.

I pray you go with me.

Exeunt

[Scene VI *Elsinore Another room in the Castle.*]

Enter *Horatio* with an *Attendant*.

Hor What are they that would speak with me?

Servant Seafaring men, sir. They say they have letters for you.

Hor. Let them come in.

[*Exit Attendant.*]

I do not know from what part of the world

I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

5

Enter *Sailors*.

Sailor God bless you, sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

Sailor. 'A shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir,—it comes from th' ambassador that was bound for England—if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is. 11

Hor. (reads the letter) 'Horatio, when thou shalt have overlook'd this, give these fellows some means to the King. They have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour, and in the grapple I boarded them. On the instant they got clear of our ship, so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy, but they knew what they did. I am to do a good turn for them. Let the King have the letters I have sent, and repair thou to me with as much speed as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb, yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England. Of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell 30

'He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET.'

Come, I will give you way for these your letters,

And do't the speedier that you may direct me

To him from whom you brought them.

Exeunt.

[Scene VII. *Elsinore. Another room in the Castle.*]

Enter *King* and *Laertes*.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain
Pursued my life.

Laer. It well appears. But tell me 5
Why you proceeded not against these feats
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.

King. O, for two special reasons,
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd, 10
But yet to me they are strong. The Queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself,—
My virtue or my plague, be it either which,—
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere, 15
I could not but by her. The other motive
Why to a public count I might not go
Is the great love the general gender bear him,
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone, 20
Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost; 25
A sister driven into desp'rate terms,
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections. But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that. You must not think 30
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
That we can let our beard be shook with danger,
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more.
I lov'd your father, and we love ourself,
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine— 35

Enter a *Messenger* with letters.

How now? What news?

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
This to your Majesty; this to the Queen.

King. From Hamlet? Who brought them?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not.
They were given me by Claudio; he receiv'd them 40
Of him that brought them.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them.
Leave us.

Exit Messenger.

[*Reads*] 'High and Mighty,—You shall know I am set naked
on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly
eyes; when I shall (first asking your pardon thereunto) recount
the occasion of my sudden and more strange return.

'HAMLET.'

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back? 50
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. 'Naked!'
And in a postscript here, he says 'alone.'
Can you advise me?

Laer. I am lost in it, my lord. But let him come! 55
It warms the very sickness in my heart
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
'Thus didest thou.'

King. If it be so, Laertes

(As how should it be so ? how otherwise ?),
Will you be rul'd by me ?

Laer. Ay, my lord, 60

So you will not o'errule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,
As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To an exploit now ripe in my device, 65
Under the which he shall not choose but fall;
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice
And call it accident.

Laer. My lord, I will be rul'd;
The rather, if you could devise it so 70
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein they say you shine. Your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him 75
As did that one; and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.

Laer. What part is that, my lord ?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth—
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears 80
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness. Two months since
Here was a gentleman of Normandy.
I have seen myself, and serv'd against, the French,
And they can well on horseback; but this gallant 85
Had witchcraft in't. He grew unto his seat,
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse
As had he been incorp'd and demi-natur'd

With the brave beast. So far he topp'd my thought
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks, 90
Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman was't ?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamound.

King. The very same.

Laer. I know him well. He is the brooch indeed
And gem of all the nation. 95

King. He made confession of you ;
And gave you such a masterly report
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cried out 'twould be a sight indeed 100
If one could match you. The scrimers of their nation
He swore had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you oppos'd them. Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy
That he could nothing do but wish and beg 105
Your sudden coming o'er to play with you.
Now, out of this—

Laer. What out of this, my lord ?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you ?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart ?

Laer. Why ask you this ? 110

King. Not that I think you did not love your father ;
But that I know love is begun by time,
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives within the very flame of love 115
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it ;
And nothing is at a like goodness still ;
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,

Dies in his own too-much. That we would do,
We should do when we would; for this 'would' changes, 120
And hath abatements and delays as many
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents,
And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But to the quick o' th' ulcer!
Hamlet comes back. What would you undertake 125
To show yourself your father's son in deed
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i' th' church!

King. No place indeed should murder sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this? Keep close within your chamber. 130
Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you; bring you in fine together
And wager on your heads He, being remiss, 135
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and, in a pass of practice,
Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do't! 140

And for that purpose I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue 145
Under the moon, can save the thing from death
This is but scratch'd withal. I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this,

Weigh what convenience both of time and means 150
 May fit us to our shape. If this should fail,
 And that our drift look through our bad performance,
 'Twere better not assay'd Therefore this project
 Should have a back or second, that might hold
 If this did blast in proof. Soft! let me see 155
 We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings—
 I ha't!
 When in your motion you are hot and dry—
 As make your bouts more violent to that end—
 And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepar'd him 160
 A chalice for the nonce; whereon but sipping,
 If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
 Our purpose may hold there.—But stay, what noise?

Enter *Queen*.

How now, sweet queen?

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel, 165
 So fast they follow. Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
 That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.
 There with fantastic garlands did she come 170
 Of crowsflowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
 That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
 But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them.
 There on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
 Clamb'ring to hang, an envious sliver broke, 175
 When down her weedy trophies and herself
 Fell in the weeping brook Her clothes spread wide
 And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up;
 Which time she chaunted snatches of old tunes,
 As one incapable of her own distress, 180
 Or like a creature native and indued

Unto that element; but long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas, then she is drown'd? 185

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears; but yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will. When these are gone, 190
The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord.
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze
But that this folly douts it. ?

Exit.

King. Let's follow, Gertrude.
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I this will give it start again; 195
Therefore let's follow.

Exeunt.

Enter two *Clowns*, [with spades and pickaxes].

Clown. Is she to be buried in Christian burial when she wilfully seeks her own salvation ?

Other. I tell thee she is; therefore make her grave straight. The crowner hath sate on her, and finds it Christian burial 5

Clown. How can that be, unless she drown'd herself in her own defence ?

Other. Why, 'tis found so.

Clown. It must be *se offendendo*; it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act; and an act hath three branches—it is to act, to do, and to perform; argal, she drown'd herself wittingly. 13

Other. Nay, but hear you, Goodman Delver!

Clown. Give me leave. Here lies the water; good. Here stands the man; good. If the man go to this water and drown himself, it is, will he nill he, he goes—mark you that. But if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself. Argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

Other. But is this law? 6

Clown. Ay, marry, is't—crowner's quest law. 25

Other. Will you ha' the truth an't ? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

Clown. Why, there thou say'st! And the more pity that great folk should have count'nance in this world to drown or hang themselves more than their even-Christen. Come, my spade! There is no ancient gentlemen but gard'ners, ditchers, and grave-makers. They hold up Adam's profession. 35

Other. Was he a gentleman ?

Clown. 'A was the first that ever bore arms.

Other. Why, he had none

Clown. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says Adam digg'd. Could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee. If thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

Other. Go to! 45

Clown. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

Other. The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants. 50

Clown. I like thy wit well, in good faith. The gallows does well. But how does it well? It does well to those that do ill. Now, thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church. Argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again, come! 56

Other. Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

Clown. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

Other. Marry, now I can tell! 60

Clown. To't.

Other. Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter *Hamlet* and *Horatio* afar off.

Clown. Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and when you are ask'd this question next, say 'a grave-maker.' The houses he makes lasts till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan; fetch me a stoup of liquor.

[*Exit Second Clown.*]

[*Clown digs and*] *sings.*

In youth when I did love, did love,

Methought it was very sweet; 70

To contract—O—the time for—a—my behave,

O, methought there—a—was nothing—a—meet.

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness. 76

Ham. 'Tis e'en so. The hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

Clown. (*sings*)

But age with his stealing steps
Hath clawed me in his clutch, 80
And hath shipped me intil the land,
As if I had never been such.

[*Throws up a skull.*]

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once. How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if 'twere Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'erreaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord. 89

Ham. Or of a courtier, which could say 'Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?' This might be my Lord Such-a-one, that prais'd my Lord Such-a-one's horse when he meant to beg it—might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord 95

Ham. Why, e'en so! and now my Lady Worm's, chapless, and knock'd about the mazzard with a sexton's spade. Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding but to play at loggets with 'em? Mine ache to think on't. 101

Clown. (*sings*)

A pickaxe and a spade, a spade,
For and a shrouding sheet,
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet 105

Throws up [another skull].

Ham. There's another Why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? Why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries. Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? Will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will scarcely lie in this box; and must th' inheritor himself have no more, Ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

122

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheepskins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calveskins too.

Ham. They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave's this, sirrah?

Clown. Mine, sir.

[*Sings*] O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet

130

Ham. I think it be thine indeed, for thou liest in't

Clown. You lie out on't, sir, and therefore 'tis not yours. For my part, I do not lie in't, yet it is mine

135

Ham. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't and say it is thine. 'Tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

Clown. 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again from me to you

140

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

Clown. For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman then?

Clown. For none neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't?

145

Clown. One that was a woman, sir, but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! We must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, this three years I have taken note of it, the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier he galls his kibe.—How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

Clown. Of all the days i' th' year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras 157

Ham. How long is that since?

Clown. Cannot you tell that? Every fool can tell that. It was the very day that young Hamlet was born—he that is mad, and sent into England? 162

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

Clown. Why, because 'a was mad. 'A shall recover his wits there; or, if 'a do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

Clown. 'Twill not be seen in him there. There the men are as mad as he. 170

Ham. How came he mad?

Clown. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

Clown. Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground? 175

Clown. Why, here in Denmark. I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i' th' earth ere he rot? 179

Clown. Faith, if 'a be not rotten before 'a die (as we have many pocky corses now-a-days that will scarce hold the laying in), 'a will last you some eight year or nine year. A tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another? 185

Clown. Why, sir, his hide is so tann'd with his trade that 'a will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore de-

cayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull now. This skull hath lien you i' th' earth three-and-twenty years. 191

Ham. Whose was it?

Clown. A whoreson mad fellow's it was. Whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not 195

Clown. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! 'A pour'd a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the King's jester.

Ham. This? 200

Clown. E'en that.

Ham. Let me see. [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio. A fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. He hath borne me on his back a thousand times. And now how abhorred in my imagination it is! My gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kiss'd I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? Quite chap-fall'n? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come. Make her laugh at that. Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing. 216

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think Alexander look'd o' this fashion i' th' earth?

Hor. E'en so 220

Ham. And smelt so? Pah!

[*Puts down the skull.*]

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander till he find it stopping a bung-hole? 226

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with

modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it; as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam, and why of that loam (whereto he was converted) might they not stop a beer barrel? 235

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.
O, that that earth which kept the world in awe
Should patch a wall t' expel the winter's flaw!
But soft! but soft! aside! Here comes the King— 240

Enter [*Priests with*] a coffin [*in funeral procession*], *King*,
Queen, *Laertes*, with *Lords* attendant.

The Queen, the courtiers. Who is this they follow?
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken
The corse they follow did with desp'rate hand
Fordo it own life. 'Twas of some estate.
Couch we awhile, and mark. 245

[*Retires with Horatio.*]

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes,

A very noble youth. Mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warranty. Her death was doubtful; 250
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
Till the last trumpet. For charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her.
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants, 255
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

Laer. Must there no more be done?

Priest.

No more be done.

We should profane the service of the dead

To sing a requiem and such rest to her

260

As to peace-parted souls

Laer.

Lay her i' th' earth ;

And from her fair and unpolluted flesh

May violets spring ! I tell thee, churlish priest,

A minist'ring angel shall my sister be

When thou liest howling

Ham.

What, the fair Ophelia ?

265

Queen Sweets to the sweet ! Farewell.[*Scatters flowers.*]

I hop'd thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife,

I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,

And not have strew'd thy grave.

Laer.

O, treble woe

Fall ten times treble on that cursed head

270

Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense

Depriv'd thee of ! Hold off the earth awhile,

Till I have caught her once more in mine arms.

Leaps in the grave.

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead

Till of this flat a mountain you have made

275

T' o'ertop old Pelion or the skyish head

Of blue Olympus

Ham. [*comes forward*] What is he whose grief

Bears such an emphasis ? whose phrase of sorrow

Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand

Like wonder-wounded hearers ? This is I,

280

Hamlet the Dane.

*Leaps in after Laertes.**Laer.*

The devil take thy soul !

[*Grapples with him.*]*Ham.* Thou pray'st not well.

I prithee take thy fingers from my throat ;

For, though I am not splenitive and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous, 285
Which let thy wisdom fear. Hold off thy hand!

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen!

Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave*]

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag. 290

Queen. O my son, what theme?

Ham. I lov'd Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers
Could not (with all their quantity of love)
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes. 295

Queen. For love of God, forbear him!

Ham. 'Swounds, show me what thou't do.

Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?

Woo't drink up esill? eat a crocodile?

I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine? 300

To outface me with leaping in her grave?

Be buried quick with her, and so will I.

And if thou prate of mountains, let them throw

Millions of acres on us, till our ground,

Singeing his pate against the burning zone, 305

Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,

I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness;
And thus a while the fit will work on him.

Anon, as patient as the female dove

When that her golden couplets are disclos'd, 310

His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir!

What is the reason that you use me thus ?

I lov'd you ever. But it is no matter.

Let Hercules himself do what he may,

The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. 315

Exit.

King. I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon him.

Exit Horatio.

[*To Laertes*] Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech.

We'll put the matter to the present push.—

Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.—

This grave shall have a living monument. 320

An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;

Till then in patience our proceeding be.

Exeunt.

[*Scene II. Elsinore. A hall in the Castle*]

Enter Hamlet and Horatio.

Ham. So much for this, sir; now shall you see the other.
You do remember all the circumstance ?

Hor. Remember it, my lord !

Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting
That would not let me sleep. Methought I lay 5
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly—
And prais'd be rashness for it; let us know,
Our indiscretion sometime serves us well
When our deep plots do pall, and that should learn us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends, 10
Rough-hew them how we will—

Hor. That is most certain.

Ham. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark

Grop'd I to find out them; had my desire,
Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew 15
To mine own room again; making so bold
(My fears forgetting manners) to unseal
Their grand commission, where I found, Horatio
(O royal knavery!), an exact command,
Larded with many several sorts of reasons, 20
Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
With, hoo! such bugs and goblins in my life—
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

Hor. Is't possible? 25

Ham. Here's the commission; read it at more leisure.
But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?

Hor. I beseech you.

Ham. Being thus benetted round with villanies,
Or I could make a prologue to my brains, 30
They had begun the play. I sat me down;
Devis'd a new commission; wrote it fair.
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
How to forget that learning; but, sir, now 35
It did me yeoman's service. Wilt thou know
Th' effect of what I wrote?

Hor. Ay, good my lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the King,
As England was his faithful tributary,
As love between them like the palm might flourish, 40
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear
And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
And many such-like as's of great charge,
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less, 45

He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving time allow'd

Hor. How was this seal'd?

Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal; 50
Folded the writ up in the form of th' other,
Subscrib'd it, gave't th' impression, plac'd it safely,
The changeling never known Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already. 55

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't

Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this employment!
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow
'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes 60
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites

Hor. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, thinks't thee, stand me now upon—
He that hath kill'd my king, and whor'd my mother;
Popp'd in between th' election and my hopes, 65
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such coz'nage—is't not perfect conscience
To quit him with this arm? And is't not to be damn'd
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil? 70

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England
What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short, the interim is mine,
And a man's life's no more than to say 'one.'
But I am very sorry, good Horatio, 75
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For by the image of my cause I see

The portraiture of his. I'll court his favours
But sure the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a tow'ring passion.

Hor. Peace! Who comes here? 80

Enter young *Osriz*, a courtier

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir. [*Aside to Horatio*] Dost
know this waterfly?

Hor. [*aside to Hamlet*] No, my good lord. 85

Ham. [*aside to Horatio*] Thy state is the more gracious; for
'tis a vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile. Let
a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's
mess. 'Tis a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession
of dirt. 90

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should
impart a thing to you from his Majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Put
your bonnet to his right use. 'Tis for the head. 96

Osr. I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed 100

Ham. But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my
complexion.

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry, as 'twere—I
cannot tell how. But, my lord, his Majesty bade me signify to
you that he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is
the matter—

Ham. I beseech you remember. 108

[*Hamlet moves him to put on his hat*]

Osr. Nay, good my lord, for mine ease, in good faith. Sir,
here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute
gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft so-
ciety and great showing. Indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he

is the card or calendar of gentry; for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see 116

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inventorially would dozy th' arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article, and his infusion of such dearth and rareness as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror, and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more. 125

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? Why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir? 130

Hor [*aside to Hamlet*] Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes? 135

Hor [*aside*] His purse is empty already. All's golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know you are not ignorant—

Ham. I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. Well, sir? 142

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but to know a man well were to know himself

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed. 150

Ham. What's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons—but well.

Osr. The King, sir, hath wager'd with him six Barbary

horses; against the which he has impon'd, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle hangers, and so. Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages? 161

Hor. [*aside to Hamlet*] I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers 164

Ham. The phrase would be more germane to the matter if we could carry cannon by our sides I would it might be hangers till then. But on! Six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages: that's the French bet against the Danish Why is this all impon'd, as you call it?

Osr. The King, sir, hath laid that, in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits; he hath laid on twelve for nine, and it would come to immediate trial if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer. 176

Ham. How if I answer no?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall. If it please his Majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me Let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the King hold his purpose, I will win for him if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits. 185

Osr. Shall I redeliver you e'en so?

Ham. To this effect, sir, after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship.

Ham. Yours, yours. [*Exit Osr.*] He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn 192

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Ham. He did comply with his dug before he suck'd it. Thus has he, and many more of the same bevy that I know the drossy

age dotes on, only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter—a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fann'd and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial—the bubbles are out. 202

Enter a *Lord*.

Lord. My lord, his Majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall. He sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes; they follow the King's pleasure. If his fitness speaks, mine is ready, now or whensoever, provided I be so able as now. 211

Lord. The King and Queen and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The Queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play

Ham. She well instructs me. 218

[*Exit Lord*.]

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so. Since he went into France I have been in continual practice I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart. But it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord— 224

Ham. It is but foolery, but it is such a kind of gangiving as would perhaps trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike anything, obey it. I will forestall their repair hither and say you are not fit. 229

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury; there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man knows aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be. 235

Enter *King, Queen, Laertes, [Osric], and Lords*, with other *Attendants* with foils and gauntlets. A table and flagons of wine on it.

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.
[*The King puts Laertes' hand into Hamlet's.*]

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir. I have done you wrong,
But pardon't, as you are a gentleman.

This presence knows,
And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd 240
With sore distraction. What I have done
That might your nature, honour, and exception
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet.
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away, 245
And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
Who does it, then? His madness. If't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy. 250
Sir, in this audience,
Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts
That I have shot my arrow o'er the house
And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature, 255
Whose motive in this case should stir me most
To my revenge. But in my terms of honour
I stand aloof, and will no reconciliation
Till by some elder masters of known honour
I have a voice and precedent of peace 260
To keep my name ungor'd. But till that time
I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely,
And will this brother's wager frankly play.
Give us the foils. Come on.

Laer. Come, one for me. 265

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes. In mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' th' darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osríc. Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord. 271
Your Grace has laid the odds o' th' weaker side.

King. I do not fear it, I have seen you both;
But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another. 275

Ham. This likes me well. These foils have all a length?
Prepare to play.

Osr. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table.
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange, 280
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The King shall drink to Hamlet's better breath,
And in the cup an union shall he throw
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups; 285
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heaven to earth,
'Now the King drinks to Hamlet.' Come, begin.
And you the judges, bear a wary eye. 290

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. *They play.*

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgment!

Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well, again!

King. Stay, give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine;
Here's to thy health

Drum; trumpets sound; a piece goes off [within].

Give him the cup.

Ham. I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile. 295
Come. (*They play.*) Another hit. What say you?

Laer. A touch, a touch; I do confess't

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath.

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows.

The Queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet. 300

Ham. Good madam!

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord, I pray you pardon me. *Drinks.*

King. [*aside*] It is the poison'd cup; it is too late

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by-and-by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face 305

Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think't.

Laer. [*aside*] And yet it is almost against my conscience.

Ham. Come for the third, Laertes! You but dally.

I pray you pass with your best violence;

I am afeard you make a wanton of me. 310

Laer. Say you so? Come on. *Play.*

Osr. Nothing neither way.

Laer. Have at you now!

[*Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they
change rapiers, [and Hamlet wounds Laertes].*]

King. Part them! They are incens'd.

Ham. Nay come! again! *The Queen falls.*

Osr. Look to the Queen there, ho!

Hor. They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord? 315

Osr. How is't, Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric.

I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery

Ham. How does the Queen?

King. She sounds to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no! the drink, the drink! O my dear Hamlet!

The drink, the drink! I am poison'd. *[Dies]*

Ham. O villany! Ho! let the door be lock'd. 322

Treachery! Seek it out.

[Laertes falls.]

Laer. It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain;

No med'cine in the world can do thee good. 325

In thee there is not half an hour of life.

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,

Unbated and envenom'd. The foul practice

Hath turn'd itself on me. Lo, here I lie,

Never to rise again. Thy mother's poison'd. 330

I can no more. The King, the King's to blame.

Ham. The point envenom'd too?

Then, venom, to thy work. *Hurts the King.*

All. Treason! treason!

King. O, yet defend me, friends! I am but hurt. 335

Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damned Dane,

Drink off this potion! Is thy union here?

Follow my mother. *King dies.*

Laer. He is justly serv'd.

It is a poison temper'd by himself.

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet. 340

Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,

Nor thine on me! *Dies.*

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.

I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!
You that look pale and tremble at this chance. 345
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time (as this fell sergeant, Death,
Is strict in his arrest) O, I could tell you—
But let it be. Horatio, I am dead,
Thou liv'st; report me and my cause aright 350
To the unsatisfied.

Hor Never believe it.

I am more an antique Roman than a Dane.
Here's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As th'art a man,
Give me the cup. Let go! By heaven, I'll ha't.
O good Horatio, what a wounded name 355
(Things standing thus unknown) shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story. *March afar off, and shot within.*

What warlike noise is this? 360

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.

Ham. O, I die, Horatio!
The potent poison quite o'ercrows my spirit.
I cannot live to hear the news from England, 365
But I do prophesy th' election lights
On Fortinbras. He has my dying voice.
So tell him, with th' occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited—the rest is silence. *Dies.*

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince,
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest! 371

[*March within.*]

Why does the drum come hither?

Enter *Fortinbras* and *English Ambassadors*, with *Drum*,
Colours, and *Attendants*.

Fort. Where is this sight ?

Hor. What is it you would see ?
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search

Fort This quarry cries on havoc. O proud Death, 375
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell
That thou so many princes at a shot
So bloodily hast struck ?

Ambassador The sight is dismal,
And our affairs from England come too late
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing 380
To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.
Where should we have our thanks ?

Hor Not from his mouth,
Had it th' ability of life to thank you
He never gave commandment for their death. 385
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arriv'd, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view,
And let me speak to th' yet unknowing world 390
How these things came about. So shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts;
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters;
Of deaths put on by cunning and forc'd cause;
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook 395
Fall'n on th' inventors' heads. All this can I
Truly deliver.

Fort. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune.

I have some rights of memory in this kingdom, 400
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me

Hor Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more.
But let this same be presently perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild, lest more mischance 405
On plots and errors happen

For. Let four captains
Bear Hamlet like a soldier to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have prov'd most royally; and for his passage
The soldiers' music and the rites of war 410
Speak loudly for him.
Take up the bodies. Such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

*Exeunt marching, after the which a peal of ordinance
are shot off.*

NOTES

ACT I. Scene I.

This scene takes place on a high 'platform'—a paved terrace—before the Castle at Elsinore (Helsingør). See i, 2, 213, 252.

2. **Nay, answer me.** *Me* is emphatic. Bernardo, in hailing Francisco, instinctively uses the sentinel's formula. Francisco, with a touch of humour, suggests that it is rather his business to ask this question of Bernardo than Bernardo's to ask it of him. Cf. i 14.—**unfold:** disclose.

3. **Long live the King!** Not, apparently, the watchword or countersign but merely a customary exclamation. Francisco, who is expecting Bernardo, recognizes his voice.

9. **sick at heart:** depressed; in low spirits.

13. **rivals:** partners.

15, 16. **the Dane:** the Danish king.—**Give:** God give.

19. **A piece of him.** A mildly humorous affirmative. Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, iv, 2, 51-54:

Nurse. Good morrow, lords.
O, tell me, did you see Aaron the Moor?
Aaron. Well, more or less, or ne'er a whit at all!
Here Aaron is; and what with Aaron now?

Beaumont and Fletcher, *Thierry and Theodoret*, iii, 2:

Bawdber. De Vitry, I take it
De Vitry All that's left of him,

Southern, *The Maid's Last Prayer*, 1693, iv, 3, p. 44:

Lady Susan. Mr Granger! is't you?
Granger. The best part of him, Madam

Horatio is a sedate person, constitutionally prone to such mild pleasantries. Cf. i, 5, 125, 126; iii, 2, 93, 94, 290, 296; iv, 6, 7; v, 2, 162, 163.

23-26. **fantasy:** imagination —**of us:** by us.—**along:** i e., to come along. Ellipsis of a verb of motion is very common.

29. **approve our eyes:** prove the trustworthiness of our eyes. —**speak to it.** They have not ventured to speak to the Ghost, for it was thought dangerous to address an apparition, except in due form. Cf. *Merry Wives*, v, 5, 51: 'They are fairies He that speaks to them shall die'; *Macbeth*, iv, 1, 89: 'Listen, but speak not to't.'

33. **What . . . seen.** This clause is the object of *assail your ears*, i.e., 'force you to hear' (with the suggestion of an attempt to convince). 'may make one more attempt to get a hearing from you for our account of what we have seen'

37. **his:** its; the regular genitive of the neuter pronoun. See i, 2, 216, note.

42. **Thou art a scholar,** etc. Commonly but erroneously explained in accordance with Douce's note, 'that the exorcisms of troublesome spirits were usually performed in Latin.' Horatio is not asked to drive away the apparition, but to question it, in order to discover what it is and why it appears. To accost the spirit was hazardous, for it might be a demon. Horatio, as a scholar, knows how to address the apparition in the right way, so as neither to offend it nor to subject himself to any evil influence. His language is formal and solemn, but he uses no Latin and utters no exorcism. See also ll. 126-139.

48, 49. **Denmark:** the King of Denmark. Cf. l. 61; i, 2, 28, 69, 125; iv, 3, 60, 67 —**sometimes:** sometime, formerly.

56-58. **might:** could —**the . . . eyes:** the testimony of my own eyes, which is a matter of the senses and must be true.

61. **Norway:** the elder Fortinbras (ll. 80-86)

62. **parle:** parley; conference between hostile leaders

63. **smote.** The parley broke up in a battle, in which the King smote (routed) the Poles. Cf. *Judges*, iii, 13: 'And he . . . went and smote Israel.' —**the sledged Poles:** the Poles, who ride in sledges. See Textual Notes.

65. **jump:** exactly, precisely. Cf. v, 2, 386; *Othello*, ii, 3, 392.

68. **in . . . opinion:** in the general view or range of my opinion (as opposed to any precise thought) *Gross and scope* is hendiadys for 'gross scope.' Cf. 'law and heraldry' for 'heraldic law' (l. 87).

70. **Good**: my good friend Cf. *Comedy of Errors*, iv, 4, 22; *Winter's Tale*, v, 1, 19; *Antony and Cleopatra*, i, 2, 25; i, 3, 78.—**tell . . . knows**: Let him who knows tell me.

72. **subject**. Collective for 'subjects' Cf. i, 2, 33.

74. **foreign mart**: dealing with foreign countries; negotiations abroad.

75. **impress**. Shipcarpenters were impressed (conscripted) in time of war.

77. **might be toward**: could be in preparation, in the offing.

81. **image**: exact likeness. Cf. iii, 2, 248; *Winter's Tale*, v, 1, 127.

83. **emulate pride**: pride of rivalry; a proud desire to rival him.

86. **compáct**. Accented on the second syllable.

87. **law and heraldry**: heraldic law, i.e., a decree made and ratified by the heralds of both countries, equivalent to what we call 'international law.' The Second Quarto reads 'heraldy,' which is an old form of the noun.

89. **seiz'd**: possessed (a regular law term).

90. **a moiety competent**: an adequate portion (of his own lands). *Moiety* was not confined to the sense of 'half.'

91, 92. **gagèd**: engaged; i.e., pledged, staked.—**had** (subjunctive): would have.—**inheritance**: possession.

93. **comart**: mutual bargain. The Folio reads *Cou'nant* (i.e., covenant).

94. **carriage . . . design'd**: the purport of the agreement drawn up. The *carriage* of any document is 'that which it carries,' its 'bearing' or 'tenour.'

96. **unimproved**: unused. To *improve* anything often means to 'utilize it,' 'put it to profitable use.' Cf. 'improved land,' 'unimproved real estate.'—**mettle**: high spirit, valour.

98. **Shark'd up**: picked up without distinction, as the shark-fish collects his prey' (Steevens).—**lawless**. So the Second Quarto (*lawlesse*). The Folio reads 'Landlesse.' *Lawless* may even mean 'outlawed,' as in Munday, *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington* (Collier's Dodsley, XIII, 17).—**resolutes**: bravoes, desperadoes.

99. **some.** This suggests that he enlisted his desperadoes without telling them just what the enterprise was.

100. **That hath a stomach in't:** that affords one an opportunity to show valour. The present tense gives the effect of quoting the very words used by Fortinbras.

101. **our state:** our government; our administration.

103. **terms compulsory.** Synonymous with *strong hand*.

105. **motive:** moving cause. Cf. i, 4, 76; ii, 2, 587; iv, 7, 16.

106. **head.** The same as *source* in meaning (cf. *wellhead*, *fountainhead*)

107. **romage:** intense general activity. Cf. Capt. Nathaniel Boteler, *Dialogues*, 1634 (ed Perrin, 1929, pp. 229, 230) '*Admiral*. What doth your word *Rummage* imply? *Captain*. It is to remove any goods or luggage, from one place or part to another, either betwixt the decks or elsewhere; but most commonly this term is appropriated to the removing or clearing of any goods or lading in the ship's hold, that so they may handsomely be stowed or ordered.'

108-125. In the Quartos but not in the Folios. Some think that Shakespeare omitted these splendid lines in revising the play because he had in the meantime written *Julius Cæsar*; but that is no reason. Their omission seems to be merely a 'cut.' Whether such cuts were made by Shakespeare or not we have no means of knowing.

108. **be.** The subjunctive in indirect discourse—an ancient construction. The *be* does not express any special doubt in the speaker's mind.

109. **Well may it sort:** It may well be in accord with this state of things.

112. **mote:** a speck of dust. Cf. *Matthew*, vii, 3.

113. **palmy:** flourishing, triumphant.

116. **squeak.** Alluding to the horribly thin and strident voice ascribed to spectres—the '*vox exigua*' of the *Æneid*, vi, 492, 493. So in *Julius Cæsar*, ii, 2, 24: 'Ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets' Cf. Dryden, *Don Sebastian*, ii, 1:

Sometimes, methinks, I hear the groans of ghosts,
Thin, hollow sounds, and lamentable screams

117. *As*. *As* may mean 'as also,' 'as well as', i.e., 'and so likewise there were.' But the ellipsis would be harsh. Perhaps a line has dropped out before *As*. The substance of the lost line would be 'Prodigies appeared in the heavens' Some critics have been rash enough to compose a verse to fill the gap¹—**trains of fire**. Among the 'wonderfull signes' that foretold the death of Cæsar, Plutarch mentions 'fires in the element [i.e., the sky], and spirites running vp and downe in the night' (North, ed. 1595, p. 787)—**dews of blood**. An oft-reported prodigy. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, II, 2, 21: 'Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol.'

118. **Disasters**: threatening signs. *Disasters* in its astrological sense includes any threatening phenomena in the heavenly bodies.—**moist star**: the moon Cf. 'the moonshine's wat'ry beams' (*Romeo and Juliet*,¹ I, 4, 62); 'the wat'ry star' (*Winter's Tale*, I, 2, 1); 'the wat'ry moon' (*Midsummer Night's Dream*, II, 1, 162); 'That night-wandering, pale, and watery star' (Marlowe, *Hero and Leander*, I, 107). According to the old science, which divided all things according to the four categories—moist, dry, hot, cold—the moon was moist by nature. Hence it was not only 'the governess of floods' (*Midsummer Night's Dream*, II, 1, 103) but had much to do with dew, mist, and fog.

119. **Upon . . . stands**: by whose influence the sea is controlled (in its tides).

120. **doomsday**. Clark and Wright cite *Matthew*, xxiv, 29: 'The moon shall not give her light.'—**eclipse**. There were several eclipses of sun or moon in Shakespeare's time.

121. **precure**: forerunning; indication in advance.—**fierce**: terrible.

122. **harbingers**. A harbinger was an officer who went ahead

¹Tschischwitz (1869) shifted the lines, putting II 121-125 between I 116 and I 117. The same change was suggested in 1872 by Gerald Massey (*The Secret Drama of Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Supplement, p. 46) and is adopted by Wilson (1934). But the preterite tense *was* (in I 120) suffices to show that II 117-120 refer to Roman history and not to contemporary Denmark.

to arrange for the lodgings of a king and his suite. The word is here used with a recollection of this sense —still: ever, always; for the fates, Horatio implies, never come unannounced.

123. **omen:** dire event.

125. **climature:** clime, country. Dyce's emendation for the Quarto reading (*Climatures*).

126. **soft!** The regular interjection to check discourse: 'hush!' 'hold!' 'enough!' Cf. i, 5, 58, iii, 1, 88; iii, 2, 410; iv, 2, 3; v, 1, 240.

127. **I'll cross it, though it blast me.** Horatio crosses the Ghost's path so as to pass directly before its face, calling upon it to stay. The apparition then stands still and he adjures it to speak. The Ghost is about to obey when the cock crows. Horatio's courage comes out strongly here, for to cross a spirit, or to let it cross you, was even more dangerous than to speak to it.—**Spreads his arms.** Not in the Folios. The Second Quarto (in the margin opposite ll. 127, 128) has '*It spreads his* [i.e., its] *armes.*' The Quarto of 1676 and Rowe are probably right in letting Horatio make this gesture.

128-139 Horatio shows a scholar's knowledge in his enumeration of the causes that send ghosts back to earth. He mentions (1) some good action which remains undone; (2) some disclosure for the benefit or protection of surviving friends; (3) the revelation of buried treasure. Abundant illustration of all three points occurs in European folklore. See Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, II, 1 (ed. Dyce, I, 263); Dekker, *Newes from Hell*, 1606 (ed. Grosart, II, 111); Henry More, *The Præexistence of the Soul*, 1647, stanzas 19, 20; Glanvil's *Saducismus Triumphatus*, 1681, Part II, pp. 235-242, 276-287; Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, ed. Hazlitt, III, 117-119.

131. **do ease:** relieve thy conscience and let thee rest in peace.—**grace to me:** be set to my credit as a virtuous action. Only on this condition does Horatio promise to carry out the apparition's wishes, for he cannot be sure that it is not a malignant ghost or even a demon.

133, 134. **thy country's fate.** Cf. ll. 108-111, 122.—**happily:** haply, perhaps.

139. **Stay.** The Ghost starts as if to go. Then the cock crows, and it stalks away. Horatio forgets his learning in his excitement and calls upon Marcellus, whom the spirit must pass in its course, to 'stop it,' though that is impossible

140. **partisan:** halberd, pike

146. **malicious mockery:** a hollow mockery of doing harm; a mere imitation of injury.

151. **lofty:** high-pitched.

152. **at his warning:** when the cock's crow warns them of sunrise. Ghosts, trolls, devils, and the like, according to a very old belief, cannot endure the sunlight (cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, III, 2, 380 ff.) Farmer cites the first hymn of Prudentius 'At Cockcrow' (*Ad Galli Cantum*), ll. 37-40:

Ferunt vagantes ^qdaemones,
Laetos tenebris nocturnum,
Gallo canente, exterritos
Sparsim timere et cedere

See H. J. Schmitz, *Die Bussbucher*, II (1898), 442.

154. **extravagant:** out of bounds; escaped from its *confine* or assigned limits — **erring:** wandering. Cf. *Othello*, I, 1, 137: 'an extravagant and wheeling stranger.'

156. **object:** sight. In Elizabethan English all that the eye can take in at one view may be called an *object*. — **probation:** proof

158. **'gainst:** just before.

162. **wholesome:** free not only from witchcraft and demonic influences, but from contagion, which was commonly ascribed to the night air. Cf. *Julius Caesar*, II, 1, 265, 266:

To dare the vile contagion of the night,
And tempt the rheumy and unpurged air.

—**strike.** Regularly used of the sudden malignant action ascribed to an evil planet (so also *sunstruck*, *moonstruck*). Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, II, 4, 14: 'If I do wake, some planet strike me down'; *Coriolanus*, II, 2, 117, 118

And with a sudden reinforcement struck
Corioles like a planet,

Dekker, *Old Fortunatus* (Pearson ed., I, 116). 'If your wit be not planet stricken, if your brains lie in their right place, you are well enough.'

163. **takes:** bewitches, enchants. All kinds of ill effects were ascribed to malicious fairies and elves—from 'pinching black and blue' (*Comedy of Errors*, II, 2, 194, cf. *Merry Wives*, v, 5, 49) to idiocy, madness, and even death (*Merry Wives*, v, 5, 51). Cf. John Webster, *The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft*, 1677, p. 323: 'The comon people, if they chance to have any sort of Epilepsie, Palsie, Convulsions, or the like, do presently perswade themselves that they are bewitched, fore-spoken, blasted, fairy-taken, or haunted with some evil spirit'; *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, i, 2 (ed. Manly, II, 98):

There they syt as still as stones in the streite,
As though they had ben taken with fairies or els with some il sprite

164. **gracious:** full of divine grace; blessed.

165. **in part.** Horatio speaks with his habitual caution.

166. **in russet mantle clad.** The dawn is cloudy or misty. *Russet* was a kind of coarse homespun, either brown or grey in colour. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v, 2, 413; Peele, *Essex his Welcome*, l. 15 (ed. Bullen, II, 270): 'thy rude tire and grey russet coat.'

173. **loves.** These gentlemen are Hamlet's personal friends. The plural of abstract nouns is common when two or more persons are mentioned. Cf. i, 2, 251, 254; II, 2, 14, 289

Scene II

This scene takes place on the same day as scene I. The time is still the forenoon, for Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo enter at l. 159 (cf. i, 1, 174, 175). The stage direction in the Second Quarto is: *Flourish. Enter Claudius, King of Denmarke, Gertrude the Queene, Counsaile* [i.e., Council]: *as Polonius, and his Sonne Laertes, Hamlet, Cum Alijs.* The text follows the Folio. The 'Lords Attendant' provides for the 'Counsaile.'

Wilson thinks that Hamlet enters after all of the other 'court figures,' but this would be a strange distortion of ceremony. One cannot imagine Polonius as allowing his son and daughter to precede the Prince.

1-39. This speech deserves careful study with reference to the character of Claudius, which is often misconceived. Its artificial style and balanced antithesis are not the effects of hypocrisy, but merely of ceremony. Being the King's first speech from the throne since his coronation, it is formal and dignified, especially so through l. 16—the end of the King's acknowledgment of the aid of his advisers. Then follows, in a style still dignified but less stilted, an account of the business for which this particular council has been assembled. Lines 17-25 sum up facts already known to the Council, and the rest of the speech concerns the dispatching of Voltemand and Cornelius as ambassadors to Norway. The whole address is appropriate, skilfully constructed, and even eloquent. It gives the audience a high idea of the intellectual powers of the King, whom we as yet have no reason to suspect or to dislike.

2. **be:** is. The subjunctive after *though* accords with the old idiom.—**that:** though that; though. *That* is common in repeating a participle just used.—**us:** all of us. Not the 'royal *we*.'—**befitted:** would befit.

4. **of woe:** woful, mournful. Cf. 'thieves of *mercy*' for 'merciful robbers' (iv, 6, 18).

5. **discretion:** wise moderation (which teaches us to restrain our natural grief).

7. **ourselves:** myself and all of you. A suggestion that the marriage was not merely a personal affair, but an advantage to the whole state. If Claudius had meant 'myself' only, he would have said 'ourself.'

8. **our:** my. The royal *we*.

9. **jointress:** a widow who has *jointure*, an estate which falls to her on the death of her husband.

10. **defeated:** 'destroyed, annulled' (Child).

11. **auspicious:** of happy aspect or expression. The line, as Steevens remarks, is 'only the ancient proverbial phrase, "to

cry with one eye and laugh with the other.” He quotes *Winter's Tale*, v, 2, 79 ff.: ‘But, O, the noble combat that ’twixt joy and sorrow was fought in Paulina! She had one eye declin’d for the loss of her husband, another elevated that the oracle was fulfill’d.’ Cf. Alanus de Insulis, *Anticlaudianus*, viii, 1: ‘Alter lascivit oculus dum profluit alter’; Massinger, *The Old Law*, ii, 1 (ed. Gifford, 1813, IV, 491):

I have known a widow laugh closely, my lord,
Under her handkerchief, when t’other part
Of her old face wept like rain in sunshine

12, 13. **mirth**: cheerfulness.—**dole**: grief.

14–16. **barr’d**: shut out; left unconsulted.—**Your better wisdoms**: not, ‘your judgment, which is better than mine,’ but ‘your wise counsel as to what it was better for me to do,’ ‘your wise preference.’ So in *Captain Thomas Stukeley* (ed. Simpson, I, 171):

I’ll send for a friend or two of mine
And take their better counsels in the matter.

Cf. *As You Like It*, ii, 7, 45: ‘your better judgments’; *Timon*, iii, 6, 52: ‘Let it not cumber your better remembrance’ (i.e., ‘your memory of pleasanter things’). For the plural cf. i, 1, 173, note.—**freely . . . along**: heartily agreed with me throughout this affair

17. **that you know**: what you already know. The Councilors are acquainted with the demand of young Fortinbras, but not with the King’s purposed reply (ll. 26–33).

18. **our worth**: my ability to govern.

20. **Our state**: my royal administration.—**disjoint and out of frame**. Synonymous: ‘disjointed,’ ‘broken in its structure.’ Such fulness of phrase is still characteristic of the official style.

21. **Colleagued . . . advantage**: with no ally except his false notion that this is a favourable moment for him. *Dream* is emphatic.

22. **to, pester us with message**: to annoy me with frequent messages. *Pester* carries both senses

24. **bands**: bonds; binding covenants and decisions.

28. **Norway**: the King of Norway. See 1, 1, 48, note.

29. **impotent**: feeble.—**bedrid**: confined to his bed—literally, ridden (i.e., carried) on a bed

31–33. **gait**: procedure.—**levies, lists, full proportions**. Three synonyms.—**subject**. Collective: 'subjects.' Cf. 1, 1, 72.

37. **To business**: to negotiate.

38. **dilated**: expressed in full, detailed. *Delated*, the Quarto reading, is merely a variant spelling of *dilated* (like the old *devide* for *divide*) and is not equivalent to 'delivered,' 'handed over.'—**allow**. The verb is attracted into the plural by the plural noun *articles*. Cf. III, 2, 207.

39. **and let . . . duty**: and let your promptness express, in action, the usual formula of farewell. This would be 'We commend our duty to your Highness,' i.e., 'We offer our devoted service' (cf. v, 2, 189, and note). See Kenyon, *Philological Quarterly*, I (1922), 71–73.

40, 41. **duty**. The repetition is intentional and effective: the ambassadors submissively echo the words of the King.—**nothing**: not at all.

42 ff. **And now, Laertes**, etc. Ceremony over, and the state business dispatched, Claudius falls gracefully into a familiar strain, which becomes still more intimate as he proceeds. At l. 45 he abandons the royal *we* and the formal *you* for the personal and affectionate *I (my)* and *thou*. He is affable as well as kingly, and Shakespeare clearly meant to depict him as endowed with distinct charm in speech and bearing.

44. **the Dane**: the Danish king

46. **my offer, not thy asking**: something granted before it is asked.

47–49. **native to**: naturally associated with; bound by ties of nature to —**instrumental**: serviceable.—**thy father**. Polonius is a noble of the highest rank. Claudius is obviously indebted to him for assistance in procuring his election as King. Both Claudius and the Queen are genuinely fond of the old councillor, slightly bored though they may sometimes be by his occasional prosing. Cf. IV, 1, 12

51. **leave and favour**: gracious permission. Hendiadys.

56. **pardon**: permission to depart. Cf. *iii*, 2, 329; More, *Richard III* (ed. Lumby, p. 76): 'When the duke had this leaue and pardon to speake, then waxed he bolde'

58-60. **wrung . . . consent**. Omitted in the Folios.

62, 63. **Take thy fair hour**. A graceful adaptation of the familiar *Carpe diem*. 'Thy life is now at its most delightful season. Be it thine to enjoy!'—**graces**: good qualities (of every kind). The verses combine permission for Laertes to enjoy his youth while it lasts ('Time be thine') with the wish that such enjoyment may be guided by the best qualities of his nature.

64. **cousin**. Often used for 'uncle,' 'nephew,' etc.

65. **more than kin**, etc. Hamlet catches up the King's words and continues them, under his breath, with bitter irony: 'Yes, nephew and son both!—a little more than normal kin, and yet not quite kindly in my feelings toward you.' He is applying to his own case an old proverbial antithesis, of which Steevens and Collier quote three good examples: 'The neerer we are in blood, the further wee must be from loue; and the greater the kindred is, the lesse the kindness must be' (Lyly, *Mother Bombe*, *iii*, 1; ed. Bond, *III*, 195); 'In kinde a father, not in kindliness' (*Gorboduc*, *i*, 1, 18); 'I would he were not so neere to us in kindred, then sure he would be neerer in kindness' (Rowley, *A Search for Money*, 1609, Percy Society ed., p. 5). Cf. Bastard, *Epigrams*, 1598, *iii*, 29: 'Neuer so many cosins: so fewe kynde'; Webster, *Duchess of Malfy*, *iv*, 2, 288-290 (ed. Lucas, *II*, 101):

You have bloodely approv'd the auncient truth,
That kindred commonly doe worse agree
Then remote strangers,

Thynne, *Emblemes and Epigrames*, 1600 (ed. Furnivall, p. 50):

Straungers to our kinde and to our bloode,
Then our owne kinde and kynn, do vs more good;

Macbeth, *ii*, 3, 146, 147.

There's daggers in men's smiles; the near [i.e., nearer] in blood,
The nearer bloody;

Matthew, x, 36 'A man's foes shall be they of his own household' (from *Micah*, vii, 6).

67. **Not . . . sun**: The clouds do not hang on me. I am only too much in the sun—more in the position of a *son* than I wish I were! Thus Hamlet bitterly refuses the title which the King has emphasized. Before Claudius can reply, the Queen interposes and thus gives him a chance to ignore Hamlet's taunt. He is glad to let it pass, for he is determined, for her sake, to be on friendly terms with his stepson.

69. **Denmark**: the King of Denmark. Cf. i, 1, 48

70. **vailed**: downcast.

72, 73. **common**: universal.—**nature**: natural life.

75. **particular**: personal, as if it were an individual experience.

79. **windy . . . breath**. A scornfully elaborate phrase for 'heavy sighs.' 'Windy sighs' was a regular phrase (Peele, *David and Bethsabe*, i, 3, 87, and Kyd, *Spanish Tragedy*, iii, 13, 165, ed. Manly, II, 433, 564).

80. **fruitful**: teeming, abundant

81, 82. **haviour**: bearing, appearance, —**moods** moody appearances. See Textual Notes.

84. **play**. Spoken with bitter emphasis. See ll. 145-149.

85. **passeth show**: surpasses all mere *signs* of grief.

87. **cómmendable**. Accented on the first syllable.

90. **bound**. The subject of the verb is *that father*; the object is *survivor*. 'That father, by dying, laid his surviving son (your father) under an obligation to mourn for him.'

92. **obsequious sorrow**: sorrow befitting obsequies (funeral rites).—**perséver**: persevere.

93. **obstinate condolément**: mourning that refuses to be comforted.

95. **incorrect to heaven**: uncorrected—not brought into submission to God's will

99. **As any . . . sense**: as anything that is the commonest object of sight or hearing.

100. **peevisish**: childish, foolish.

101, 102. **a fault . . . nature**: a triple fault, involving (1) rebellion against God's will; (2) unfilial feelings (as if one

blamed one's father for dying); (3) revolt against the established order of nature (for death is as natural as life).

103-105. **whose.** The antecedent seems to be *nature* rather than *reason* — **common theme:** for the natural order of things proclaims that death must be the universal lot of mankind. — **still:** ever, always — **he.** Good Elizabethan grammar.

106. **We.** The royal *we* appropriately introduces the sentence relating to succession to the throne. In l. 112 the more familiar and affectionate *I* is fitly used. Then, in l. 114, the formal style of royalty is resumed in the expression of a request that is in fact a command.

107. **unprevailing:** unavailing.

108-117 Thus the King solemnly proclaims Hamlet his heir, and, even in this elective monarchy, such an announcement would go far to determine the succession. Cf. III, 2, 355-359. We must not regard his words as hypocritical. He loves the Queen passionately, and she is devoted to her son. Besides, Claudius is not an habitual or hardened criminal, nor does he wish to increase his guilt by further offences. He hopes to live at peace with Hamlet and to atone for past wrongs by kindness in the days to come. That this cannot be, is a part of the tragedy. It is the King's nemesis that the good he purposes turns to evil in his hands.

110. **nobility of love:** distinguished affection.

112. **impart:** express myself. Cf. Henry Porter, *Two Angry Women of Abington*, 1599 (Malone Society, II, 257, 258): 'With all the parts of neighbor loue I [do] impart my selfe to maister Goursey.' — **For:** as for.

113. **school:** your university studies. The university of Wittenberg (founded in 1502, united with that of Halle in 1817) was at the height of its reputation in Shakespeare's day and was much esteemed in England because of its connection with Luther and the Reformation. Chettle in his tragedy of *Hoffman* (ca 1602) speaks of 'Witteuberg, where wit growes' (ed. 1631, C^{ro}). Nashe, however, attacks the institution in *The Unfortunate Traveller*, 1594 (ed. McKerrow, II, 247 ff.).

114. **retrograde:** contrary; literally, moving backward. Cf.

Chapman, *May Day*, 111 (Pearson ed., II, 373): 'Come, be not retrograde to our desires.' *Retrograde*, as an astronomical term, describes the motion of a planet when it seems to move backward, i.e., in a direction contrary to the order of the signs of the zodiac.

115. **bend you**: bow your will; submit your inclination.

116. **our eye**: my royal presence; at court. Cf. iv, 4, 6; iv, 7, 45.

117-119 **son**. The King, with unruffled dignity, repeats the words of l. 64, emphasizing once more that title (*son*) which has provoked Hamlet's bitter jest (l. 65). The Queen interposes again (as in l. 68), thus preventing any further taunts and enabling Hamlet to obey *her* rather than his stepfather. She shows herself a skilful peacemaker.—**thy . . . thee**. The familiar and affectionate form of address. The King has used the more formal *you*.

121. The King does not fail to note that Hamlet has ignored him and addressed his reply to the Queen; but he is ready to accept the answer as satisfactory. He tries to persuade himself that all will be well.

122. **Be as ourself**: Regard yourself as King to all intents and purposes.

124. **Sits . . . heart**: gives me heartfelt satisfaction.—**grace**: honour.

125. **Denmark**. Cf. i, 1, 48.

127. **rouse**: drink, draught; especially, a deep draught—one that empties the beaker. The spelling *rouce* (in the Folios) shows the pronunciation. *Rouse* is a clipped form of *carouse* (German *gar aus*, 'quite out'). See v, 2, 300.—**bruit again**: report again, reecho. The King, who wishes to honour his stepson, but is working out his own fate, selects a kind of tribute that is particularly repugnant to Hamlet, educated at a foreign university and constitutionally averse to the coarser manners of the Scandinavians, especially to their heavy drinking. Cf. i, 4, 13-38. In 1490, when James IV of Scotland and his wife were entertained at Baahus Castle in Norway, 'at the table the toasts of the King, the Queen, and some other noble persons were

drunk, each toast accompanied with six cannon shots' (A. H. Millar, *Scottish Review*, XXI [1893], 160).

129. **too too.** A very common reduplication of *too*. The accent seems to have been *too'too*, with no pause between the words.—**solid.** The Folio reading. The Second Quarto reads 'this too too sallied flesh'; the First, 'this too much grieu'd and sallied flesh.' *Sallied* may well be a form of *solid*, due to confusion of pronunciation between *ō* and *ā*. Cf. such forms as *farren* for *foreign*; *clatpole* for *clotpole*; *quandam* for *quondam*; *asprey* for *osprey*; *arras* for *orris*. George MacDonald's interpretation of *sallied* as 'sullied' is eloquently defended by Wilson. *Sallied* would be an easy misprint for *sullied*, and *sallies* for *sullies* occurs in the Second Quarto in ii, 1, 39, and *vn-sallied* for *unsullied* in *Love's Labour's Lost*, v, 2, 352 (Folio). But the explanation of *sullied* as indicating that Hamlet regards his own flesh as defiled by his mother's incest is far-fetched, and *solid* is obviously correct. Hamlet wishes that one who, like himself, is tired of life could melt away with a wish, or that suicide were not forbidden by God's law 'Thou shalt not kill.' What follows explains why he is life-weary. There is a curious coincidence of phraseology (*weary*, *solid*, and *melt*) in 2 *Henry IV*, iii, 1, 47-49:

And the continent,
Weary of solid firmness, melt itself
Into the sea!

132. **canon:** divine law.

134. **uses.** Either 'customs' or (better) 'enjoyments,' i.e., 'advantages to be derived from life in this world.'

135. **an unweeded garden.** Cf. Rowlands, *Hell's Broke Loose*, 1605 (Hunterian Club ed., p. 3): 'In this vn-weeded Garden of the World.'

137. **merely:** entirely, utterly.

140. **Hyperion:** the sun god, the most beautiful of the divinities. The manly beauty of the elder Hamlet is several times emphasized; as by Marcellus in i, 1, 143, by Horatio in i, 2, 186, and by Hamlet in his famous speech to his mother: note especially 'Hyperion's curls' (iii, 4, 55-63)

141 **might not beteem**: could not allow.

147. **or ere**. Both *or* and *ere* mean 'before,' and the combination simply emphasizes the idea. This *or* is not the conjunction *or* but a form related to the Anglo-Saxon *ær* (*ere*). Cf. l. 183.

150. **discourse of reason**: the process or faculty of reasoning. To *discourse* is an old word for to 'pass from premises to conclusions.' The noun *discourse* (with or without the added phrase *of reason*) is used for either the process or the faculty. Cf. iv, 4, 36-39.

153 **Than I to Hercules**. A suggestion as to Hamlet's personal appearance. He is strong and active—a good fencer—but not stalwart.

154 **unrighteous**: because they were insincere.

155 **left the flushing**: allowed the redness to disappear.—**galled**: irritated, inflamed. *Salt, flushing, and galled* all emphasize the same idea. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, v, 3, 55: 'Their eyes o'ergalled with recourse of tears.'

157. **dexterity**: speed, eager haste.

158. **nor it cannot**. Such double negatives are common.

160. **I am glad**, etc. A courteous greeting, mechanically uttered before Hamlet sees who it is. The next line is spoken in enthusiastic recognition of his friend.

161. **myself**. Emphatic. Hamlet will not forget Horatio so long as he remains conscious of his own identity,*for Horatio is his *alter ego*, his second self.

163. **change**: exchange. I will not call you 'servant,' nor shall you call me 'lord': we will call each other 'friend.'

164. **And what make you?** And what are you doing?—**from**: away from.

165-167. Hamlet's courtesy to his inferiors is charming. It is not without reason that Ophelia calls him 'the glass of fashion and the mould of form' (iii, 1, 161). This makes the rudeness which he puts on when he is counterfeiting madness all the more deceptive.

169. **A truant disposition**: a feeling that I should like to run away from school. Horatio, in his mildly humorous way, replies as if Hamlet had said *makes*, and gives himself a character

quite at variance with his real nature. *Disposition* often means (as here) a 'mood' or 'fancy.'—my lord. Practically a single word (cf. French *milord*) and often preceded by an adjective.

174. **your affair.** Emphatic: 'your actual business.'

175. **to drink deep.** Cf. 1, 4, 8-22, where Hamlet expresses his dislike of the Danish habit of heavy drinking.

180. **Thrift:** mere economy. A bitter jest. The only reason for such haste was, he says, to save the remnants of the funeral feast.—**bak'd meats:** pasties. Elaborate funeral feasts are an old and universal custom, only recently fallen into disuse. The Scandinavian funeral feasts (or *arvals*) are often mentioned in the sagas: but of these Shakespeare knew nothing, he is simply reporting the manners of his own time. See Viscount Dillon, *The Antiquary*, XXVI (1892), 11-14.

181 **coldly:** when cold; in a cold state. Adverbs in *-ly* were often used to express, not *manner* (as in modern English), but *condition* (like adjectives)

182. **dearest.** The formula devised by Clark and Wright to cover the Elizabethan meanings of this word cannot be improved: 'Dear is used of whatever touches us nearly either in love or hate, joy or sorrow.' *My dearest foe* is, then, 'my bitterest enemy.' The whole speech has a proverbial cast; there is no allusion to any particular person.

183. **Or ever:** before ever. Cf. 1. 147, note.

186. **once.** Horatio, though a Dane (v, 2, 352), was not a courtier; but he has once before visited the Danish court, doubtless as Hamlet's guest in some university vacation. His words in 1, 1, 60-63, need not imply that Horatio was with the elder Hamlet in the Norwegian and Polish combats.—**goodly:** handsome. Cf. 1, 1, 47-49.

187, 188. **He was . . . again.** The Folio puts a comma after *man*, a colon after *all*; the Second Quarto lacks both. The Quarto text would mean, as Clark and Wright interpret it, 'He was, take him for all in all, a man upon whose like I shall not look again.' Cf. Mabbe, *Celestina* (ed. *Tudor Translations*, p. 96): "Take him all together, and for all in all, you shall not finde such another.' For the loose (but common) construction,

cf. Ford and Dekker, *The Sun's Darling*, iii, 1, 2, 3:

Thou hadst a body the four elements
Dwelt never in a fairer,

Greene, *The Defence of Conny Catching*, 1592 (ed Grosart, XI, 88): 'Such foolish affection towards one she knew not what he was, nor whither he would'—a man. Cf. *Julius Caesar*, v, 5, 73-75:

His life was gentle, and the elements
So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, 'This was a man!'

190. Horatio has been startled by Hamlet's 'Methinks I see my father.' Hamlet is equally surprised by Horatio's words.

192 **Season your admiration**: Moderate or control your astonishment.

193. **deliver**: report, relate. Cf. l. 209.

198. **the dead vast**. *Vast*, the reading of the First Quarto, is generally preferred by editors to *wast* (i.e., *waste*), the reading of the Second Quarto and the Folio. *Waste* describes the night as a great void, and suggests illimitable darkness. *Vast* expresses the second of these ideas clearly and suggests the first. Cf. *Tempest*, 1, 2, 327: 'that vast of night.'

200. **at point**: completely.—**cap-a-pe**: from head to foot. Cf. *Winter's Tale*, iv, 4, 761.

203. **oppress'd**: overwhelmed by the horror of the sight.—**fear-surprised**: seized upon by fear. *Surprise* usually means to 'take captive,' 'arrest,' 'seize,' literally or figuratively.

204, 205. **his truncheon's length**. The truncheon was a short staff or baton, carried as a sign of military command. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, v, 3, 52, 53:

The hand of Mars
Beck'ning with fiery truncheon my retire.

—**distill'd**: dissolved, disintegrated.—**with the act of fear**: by the action of fear.

207. **In dreadful secrecy**: as a dread secret; under a solemn pledge of silence. Cf. *2 Henry VI*, iii, 2, 158: 'A dreadful oath, sworn with a solemn tongue!'

216, 217 **it head**: its head. Three forms for the genitive case of *it* were in use: *his*, the ancient form for both masculine and neuter; *its* or *it's*, a form adopted under the influence of a feeling that *his* is exclusively masculine; *it*, a compromise form. Of these *his* is by far the commonest in Shakespeare. Cf. v, 1, 244.—**did address . . . speak**: began to make such movements as indicated that it meant to speak.—**address**: apply.

224. **Indeed, indeed, sirs**: Quite right, gentlemen. 'This is Hamlet's courteous acknowledgment of Horatio's last remark, and indicates his approval of the conduct of his friends' (Child). See note on ll. 165-167.

230. **beaver**: visor. Helmets differed much in the construction of the movable front or 'face-guard.' If this consisted of two parts, the upper (the visor) was shoved up, and the lower (the beaver) down, when the helmet was open. If the face-guard was single, it was called either *visor* or *beaver* indifferently, and was so adjusted as to be lowered in some helmets, raised in others, and in still others either raised or lowered at will.

232. **countenance**: expression (of the face).

235. **constantly**: unswervingly.

236. **amaz'd you**: confused your thoughts. Horatio does not mean merely that Hamlet would have been astonished, but that he would have been unable to think at all—would not have known what to think of the nature and purpose of the apparition. Cf. ii, 2, 591, 592; iii, 2, 339, iii, 4, 112.

238. **tell**: count.

240. **grizzled**: grey. 'A sable silver'd' means exactly the same thing: 'black with white hairs intermixed.' Horatio varies the phrase instead of answering baldly 'yes.' So he does in 1, 4, 1, 2:

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air

244. **assume**. Hamlet does not know whether the apparition was his father's ghost or a demon that had taken the shape of his father. See Introduction.

245. **gape.** Hell-mouth was a familiar figure in mediæval art (e.g., in the Anglo-Saxon *Cædmon* manuscript), in the religious pageants, and on the Elizabethan stage. It was an enormous wide-open mouth with huge teeth. 'One hell-mouth' ('j Hell mought') is an item in an inventory of the properties of the Lord Admiral's Players in 1599 (*Henslow Papers*, ed. Greg, p 116) Cf. Harsnet, *Declaration*, 1603, p 71: 'The litle children were neuer so afrajd of hell mouth in the old plaies painted with great gang teeth, staring eyes, and a foule bottle nose.'¹

246. **hold my peace.** Hamlet is thinking of the danger of speaking to a demon. Cf. i, 1, 42, and note

247. **conceal'd.** So Hamlet infers from Horatio's words in ll. 206, 207.

248. **Let it be tenable:** Regard it as something that must be held.

254. **Your loves, as mine to you.** Another mark of Hamlet's courtesy. He will not allow Horatio and the rest to call themselves his servants and offer him their duty. Let them rather regard him as their friend and give him their love. Cf. ll 162, 163; i, 5, 191.—**loves.** Cf. i, 1, 173.

256. **I doubt some foul play:** I suspect that something is wrong. *Foul play* did not to the Elizabethans, as to us, suggest exclusively murder. Hamlet has no definite suspicion of the truth until the Ghost reveals it (i, 5, 25, 26). *

¹See Hearne's ed. of Fordun, p 1403 (two plates); Hone, *Ancient Mysteries Described*, 1823, p 138 (plate); Thomas Sharp, *A Dissertation on the Pageants anciently performed at Coventry*, 1825, pp. 61-63, and plates 5-8, Henry Ellis, *Account of Cædmon's Metrical Paraphrase*, 1833, plates iv, xi, Fairholt, *Lord Mayor's Pageants*, I (1843), xxix ff (with figure), Halliwell, *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*, 6th ed., II, 289; *The Buggbears*, iv, 2, 78-80 (ed Bond, *Early Plays from the Italian*, p 127), *Arden of Feversham*, iv, 3, 1-3 (ed Tucker Brooke, *The Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p 24), Yarrington, *Two Tragedies in One*, 1601 (ed. Bullen, *Old English Plays*, IV, 92); *The Tryall of Cheualry*, 1605 (same, II, 285); Middleton, *More Dissemblers besides Women*, iv, 2, 129-131 (ed Bullen, VI, 453); Tourneur, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, i, 3 (ed. Collins, II, 29).

Scene III.

The Ghost has appeared at one o'clock in the morning (1, 1, 39). Scene II provides for the forenoon of the same day, scene III for the afternoon. Thus there is a fitting interval between scene II and the beginning of scene IV—after midnight, when Hamlet and his friends are watching for the Ghost.

3. **convoy:** means of conveyance.

6. **fashion:** a habit of young men or young princes.—**a toy in blood:** a caprice of youthful passion.

7. **violet.** Cf. Chapman, *Revenge for Honour*, v, 2 (Pearson ed., III, 351): 'the prime virgins of the Spring, the violets.'—**in . . . nature:** in the early prime (the springtime) of life. This passage is enough to settle the question of Hamlet's age, and its testimony is confirmed by 'young' (l. 124) and 'blown youth' (III, 1, 167).—**primy.** Cf. *The Repentance of Robert Greene*, 1592 (ed. Grosart, XI, 179): 'Oh were I now to begin the flower of my youth, were I now in the prime of my yeares, how far would I bee from my former follies.'

8. The metre of this verse is exquisite. *Sweet*, if dwelt upon in pronunciation, gives the effect of two syllables, since the pitch of the voice will vary in the vowel.—**Forward:** early. Cf. *Two Gentlemen*, i, 1, 45: 'the most forward bud.'

9. **The perfume . . . minute:** something that makes a passing minute sweet and fills it up; the pleasant pastime of a minute.

10. **No more but so?** Only that and nothing more? Not spoken in plaintive accents; for Ophelia does not doubt Hamlet, nor, gentle as she is, has she any lack of spirit. Her question is merely an acknowledgment that she is listening to her brother's sermon, much as if she had said 'Ah?' 'Indeed?' or 'Well?' The actress's foreknowledge of Ophelia's doom should not overshadow this scene. Ophelia is full of the joy of living; and she is rather more than a match for her brother, as we shall see presently (ll. 45-51).

11. **nature crescent:** a man's nature (or being), as it grows.

12 **thews**: sinews.—**this temple**: the body. The metaphor is carried out in the next lines 'As the body (the temple) grows larger, the services conducted therein by the mind and soul (the priests of the temple) grow more extensive and elaborate,' i.e., 'greater and greater objects occupy the thoughts and affections.' The figure is Biblical. See *1 Corinthians*, vi, 19 'Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?' In *Macbeth*, ii, 3, 73, the King's body is called 'the Lord's anointed temple'

14. **withal**: at the same time

15, 16. **soil**: foul thought.—**cautel**: wile, deceit.—**will**: desire.

17 **His greatness weigh'd**: when his high rank is taken into consideration.

18. Omitted in the Quartos

20. **Carve for himself**: indulge his own fancy, choose for himself. Cf. *Othello*, ii, 3, 173, 174.

He that stirs next to carve for his own rage
Holds his soul light, he dies upon this motion;

Lyly, *Mother Bombie*, i, 3 (ed. Bond, III, 178, 179): 'Neither father nor mother . . . shalbe her caruer in a husband' The figure (which had become a mere idiom) alludes to the carver's opportunity to select some special tidbit

21. **safety**. Trisyllabic. The Folio reads *sanctity*. Wilson accepts Theobald's conjecture, *sanity* — **health**: welfare.

23. **voice and yielding**: authority and assent.

26. **in . . . place**: acting as he must in his special circumstances and under the restrictions of his rank.

28. **main**: mighty, powerful; not, chief.—**goes withal**: agrees therewith.

34. **affection**: feelings. Do not let yourself go so far forward as your natural feelings, if unrestrained, might lead you. The military metaphor is carried out in the next line. Laertes, like his father, is fond of elaborate figures of speech and rather plumes himself upon his elegant language.

36. **chariest**: most sparing; most cautious and circumspect.

39, 40. **canker**: the rose caterpillar; called 'a worm i' th' bud' in *Twelfth Night*, II, 4, 114. This *galls* (gnaws) the heart of the young roses 'before the buds (French *boutons*) are unclosed.' Early flowers are called 'the first-born infants of the spring' in *Love's Labour's Lost*, I, 1, 101. Cf. *Two Gentlemen*, I, 1, 45, 46.

The most forward bud
Is eaten by the canker ere it blow,

Day, *Law Tricks*, 1608, II, 1 (ed. Bullen, II, 31):

Do not let despaire,
Like the ranke cancker bred by sultrie aire,
Eate this young Rose of beautie in the bud.

44. **Youth . . . near**: Youth, in its natural ardour, often rebels against itself (acts contrary to its better nature), even if no tempter is at hand. The impulses and passions that rise against reason and self-control are often described as rebels or insurgents. Cf. III, 4, 82-85; *All's Well*, V, 3, 6-8:

Natural rebellion, done i' th' blaze of youth,
When oil and fire, too strong for reason's force,
O'erbears it and burns on,

Antony and Cleopatra, I, 4, 31-33.

As we rate boys who, being mature in knowledge,
Pawn their experience to their present pleasure
And so rebel to judgment.

45-52. Ophelia is quietly amused at the wise airs of her brother, who resembles his father in his fondness for holding forth. She receives the sermon demurely; and then, when he is least expecting a retort, she bids him take a leaf out of his own book. The effect is diverting: Laertes suddenly remembers that he is in a hurry.

45. **th' effect**: the purport, the substance.—**lesson**: with a mischievous suggestion that Laertes is 'reading a lesson' like a preacher.

47. **ungracious**: graceless.

49. **Whiles**: whilst, while.—**libertine**: free-liver.

50. **primrose path.** So in *Macbeth*, II, 3, 21: 'the primrose way to th' everlasting bonfire.' Cf. *Matthew*, vii, 13, 14.—**dalliance:** pleasure, self-indulgence.

51. **reck not his own rede:** heeds not his own counsel.—**O, fear me not!** O, don't fear for me! don't worry about me! Cf. III, 4, 7.

53. **A double blessing . . . grace:** To receive two blessings (at parting from one's father) is a double favour from heaven.

54. **Occasion smiles . . . leave:** Opportunity treats me kindly in granting me this second good-bye.

57. **There.** Polonius lays his hand on his son's head and gives him his blessing

58 ff. Rushton (*Shakespeare's Euphuism*, 1871, p. 46) long ago observed that these precepts resemble the advice of Euphuus to Philautus (Lyly, *Euphuus*, ed. Bond, II, 31). He quotes:

Be not lauish of thy tongue .

Euery one that shaketh thee by the hand, is not ioyned to thee in heart . .

Be not quarrellous for euery lyght occasion, they are impatient in their anger of any equal, readie to reuenge an iniury, but neuer wont to profer any they neuer fight without prouoking, and once prouoked they neuer cease. . . It shal be there better to heare what they say, then to speak what thou thinkest.

Polonius's advice is sound and sensible—not more 'worldly-wise' than the occasion warrants¹; and it concludes with a precept which raises the whole speech to a high ethical standard. Compare the Countess's farewell to her son in *All's Well*, I, 1, 70-79.

Be thou blest, Bertram, and succeed thy father
In manners, as in shape! Thy blood and virtue
Contend for empire in thee, and thy goodness
Share with thy birthright! Love all, trust a few,
Do wrong to none Be able for thine enemy

¹For similar precepts see Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 707-716, 'Rabbi Bilesc's Farewell to his Son' in *Greene's Mourning Garment* (ed. Grosart, IX, 137-139); Greene, *James IV*, IV, 1, 149-166 (ed. Collins, II, 93, 94); Greene, *The Card of Fancie* (ed. Grosart, IV, 21-23); Florio's *Second Fruits*, 1591, Chap. vi, pp. 92-105, Massinger, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, I, 2, 129 ff. (ed. Gayley, *Representative Comedies*, III, 338).

Rather in power than use, and keep thy friend
Under thy own life's key Be check'd for silence,
But never tax'd for speech What heaven more will,
That thee may furnish, and my prayers pluck down,
Fall on thy head!

59 **charácter**: engrave, inscribe. Cf. 1, 5, 98-104.

60. **unproportion'd**: unsymmetrical; out of harmony with reason and good conduct.—**his**: its. See 1, 2, 216, note.

61. **vulgar**: indiscriminate in friendship.

64, 65. But do not dull . . . **comrade**: But do not make thy palm so callous by shaking hands with everybody that it can no longer feel the difference between a true friend and a chance acquaintance.—**entertainment**: reception, welcoming.—**comrade**. The Folio reading. The Quartos have *courage*, which Wilson retains, explaining it as 'spark,' 'brave,' 'blood'; but the passage that he quotes from the *New English Dictionary* does not confirm this reading. Furthermore, the metre requires the word to be accented on the second syllable, and this is a known accent for *comrade* (1 *Henry IV*, iv, 1, 96) but unlikely for *courage*. Finally, *courage* is an obvious misprint for *comrague*, i.e., 'fellow-rogue.' Cf. Sir Edward Hoby, *A Curry-combe for a Coxe-combe*, 1615, p. 69. 'his poore Camragues of Doway.'

65-67. **Beware . . . of thee**. Cf. Castiglione, *Il Cortegiano* (in Sir Thomas Hoby's version, *The Courtier*, ed 1577, sig. Dv r^o):

Neither let him runne rashly to these combates, but when hee must needes to saue his estimation withall . . . But when a man perceyueeth that he is entred so farre that hee cannot draw back without burthen, hee must, both in such thinges he hath to do before the combate, and also in the combat be utterly resolued with hymselfe, and alwayes shew a readinesse and a stomacke

—**Bear't**: Conduct the affair.—**that**: so that.—**opposèd**: opponent.

68. **voice**: suffrage, recommendation, approval

69. **censure**: judgment, opinion. Cf. iii, 2, 92.

70, 71. **Costly**. The advice of Euphues is quite different (ed. Bond, II, 227): 'For thy dyet, be not sumptuous, nor yet

simple. For thy attyre, not costly, nor yet clownish, but cutting thy coat by thy cloth.'—**express'd in fancy**: showing its costliness by anything fantastic about it. The next phrase repeats the idea.

72. **the apparel . . . man**. Proverbial. Cf. Fynes Moryson, *Itinerary* (1599), II, 46: 'The Wise man hath taught vs, that the apparrell in some sort shewes the man.'

74. **Are most . . . in that**: show their fine taste and their gentlemanly instincts more in that than in any other point of manners. The Second Quarto reads 'Or of a most select and generous, chiefe in that'; the Folio, 'Are of a most select and generous cheff in that.' The correction is due to Rowe. See Textual Notes.

76. **loan . . . friend** An old saw runs:

I had my I lent my I asked my I loste my	}	sylvuer	{	And my To my Of my And my	}	frynde.
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See Kaluza, *The Romaunt of the Rose*, I, 81, note; Rimbault, *A Little Book of Songs and Ballads*, 1851, p. 42.

77. **borrowing . . . husbandry**: A habit of borrowing makes one less keen about economy.

78-80. **This above all . . . any man**. Thus Polonius rises from his salutary precepts of worldly wisdom to one great general truth which includes and ennobles them all.

81. **season this**: ripen this advice; bring it to fruition in good conduct Cf. II, 2, 145: 'She took the fruits of my advice.'

83. **tend**: are waiting.

94. **put on me**: brought to my notice.

98. **Give me up the truth**: Tell me the whole truth.

99. **tenders**: offers

102. **Unsifted**: untried, inexperienced

106-109. Polonius puns on *tender* in the sense of 'an offer' (l. 106), of 'hold' or 'regard' (l. 107), and finally of 'furnish' or 'afford' (l. 109): 'Hold yourself at a higher rate,—don't make yourself so cheap,—or you'll furnish me with a fool for

a daughter (by making a fool of yourself).—**crack the wind** . . . **phrase**: make the poor word pant and wheeze like an over-ridden horse.—**Running it thus**. Cf. *Comedy of Errors*, iv, 1, 57: 'Fie, now you run this humour out of breath!'; Chapman, *An Humorous Day's Mirth* (Pearson ed., I, 65) 'Heres a poore name run out of breath quickly!'; Milton, *Animadversion upon the Remonstrant's Defence* (Pickering ed., III, 240) 'You thus persecute ingenuous men all over your booke with this one over-tir'd rubricall conceit still of blushing; but if you have no mercy upon them, yet spare your selfe, lest you bejade the good galloway, your owne opiniaster wit, and make the very conceit it selfe blush with spur-galling.'—**Running**. Collier's emendation for *Wrong* (Second Quarto) or *Roaming* (Folio).

110. In this and her next speech Ophelia speaks with gentle dignity and defends herself with spirit, though with perfect respect.—**impórtun'd**. The usual accent in Shakespeare.

112. **fashion**: in precisely the same sense in which Laertes uses the word in l. 6.—**Go to**. Literally, 'Go away!' and, like our colloquial *Go way!* (which is an old idiom), used to express reproof, expostulation, impatience, or incredulity. Sometimes it merely closes or shuts off discussion, like 'Very well!' or 'Enough said!'

113. **countenance**: authority, confirmation.

115. **springes**: snares. The woodcock (though in fact an intelligent bird) served as a proverbial synonym for credulous foolishness. It was even supposed to have actually no brains. See v, 2, 317. Cf. Heywood, *Pelopæa and Alope* (Pearson ed., VI, 299):

Mens flatteries
Are just like Circes riches, which can turne
Vain-glorious fooles to Asses, credulous Fooles
To Woodcocks

116. **prodigal**: prodigally, superabundantly

117-119. **These blazes** . . . **a-making**: such flashes of youthful fancy, which have more show than substance, and whose appearance and reality both die out suddenly, even while the promise is being uttered. Polonius is embroidering the prov-

erb, 'Hot love soon cold.' Cf. Lyly, *Mother Bombie*, iv, 1 (ed Bond, III, 206): 'Bauins [i.e., fagots of brushwood] will haue their flashes, and youth their fansies, the one as soon quenched as the other burnt.'

122, 123. **Set . . . parley:** When a besieger appears before the castle of your heart and summons you to a parley, do not immediately enter into negotiations (*entreatments*) for surrender. The metaphor by which a woman or a woman's heart is identified with a castle or walled town defending itself against besiegers was common in the Middle Ages and had become conventional long before Shakespeare's time.¹ It survives in the phrase 'to lay siege to one's heart' Cf. Greene, *Mamillia*, 1583 (ed. Grosart, II, 25): 'What? shall the beauty of Pharicles enchant thy mynde, or his filed speech bewitch thy senses? Wil not he thinke the castle wanteth but scaling, that yeeldeth at the first shot, and that the bulwarke wanted but batterie, that at the first parle becomes Prisoners?' Chapman, *May Day*, i, 1 (Pearson ed., II, 325): 'Well shee may hold out a parlee or two, for 'tis a weake fort that obeyes at the first or second summons'; Chapman, *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria* (Pearson ed., I, 22).

Prince of Arcadia, louely Doricles,
Be not discouraged that my daughter heere,
Like a well fortified and loftie tower,
Is so repulsive and vnapt to yelde. •
The royall siege of your heroycke partes
In her achecuement will be more renound,
And with the greater mente is imployde

The figure is elaborated, with an affectation of military detail, in Howell's *Familiar Letters*, Book II, no. 4 (ed. Jacobs, p. 379):

¹See *Gentleman's Magazine*, New Series, III (1835), 199, 200, A Schultz, *Das Hofische Leben zur Zeit der Minnesinger*, 1889, I, 577, fig 171, and J. von Antoniewicz, *Romanische Forschungen*, V (1890), 248-251, for details and for illustrative figures from old ivory carvings. For a pageant of such a Castle presented before Henry VIII in 1511 see Edward Hall's *Chronicle* (ed 1809, p 526). For a similar show performed before Queen Elizabeth for the entertainment of the French ambassadors in 1581, see Nichols, *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth*, 2d ed., 1823, II, 310-329.

'There are some Beauties so strong, that they are Leaguer-proof, they are so barricado'd, that no Battery . . . can do good upon them. There are others that are tenable a good while, and will endure the brunt of a Siege, but will incline to parley at last; and you know, that Fort and Female which begins to parley is half won'

126 **In few:** in short, in brief.

127 **brokers:** panders, procurers. Polonius defines the word in l. 129

128 **Not . . . show.** Ophelia has described Hamlet's vows as 'holy.' Polonius retorts that their holiness is mere disguise; they wear the garb of innocence, but that, he says, is not their true colour — **investments:** vesture, attire. Cf. 'Whose white investments figure innocence' (2 *Henry IV*, iv, 1, 45), 'In pure white robes, Like very sanctity' (*Winter's Tale*, iii, 3, 22, 23).

129, 130. **mere:** out-and-out. — **Breathing . . . bawds:** speaking in soft and persuasive accents, like hypocritical tempters. Cf. *As You Like It*, ii, 3, 13: 'sanctified and holy traitors'; *Merchant of Venice*, iii, 4, 27 'I have toward heaven breath'd a secret vow.' — **bawds.** Theobald's emendation for the Quarto and Folio reading, *bonds*. Some editors retain *bonds*, interpreting it as 'vows' or 'pledges'; but bonds do not 'breathe'

133 **slander:** disgrace; spend discreditably — **moment:** momentary.

135 **Come your ways:** Come along *Ways* is an old genitive used adverbially ('on your way'). Cf. iii, 1, 133

Scene IV.

This scene takes place on the second night of the action and begins shortly after midnight. See i, 1, 174, 175; i, 2, 160 ff., 189, 225, 252, 253

1. **shrewdly.** The literal meaning of *shrewdly* is 'cursedly,' 'wickedly,' but it is often used (like our *plaguily*, *confoundedly*) to strengthen a verb (especially one that denotes some disagreeable action).

2. **eager:** sharp Horatio's method of saying 'yes' has already been noted (1, 2, 241, 242)

3. **hour.** Often dissyllabic and frequently spelled *hower* (so in the Folio here).

6. **the spirit.** Hamlet does not commit himself on the question whether or not the apparition is his father's ghost. Cf. 1, 2, 199, 241, 244.—**pieces:** pieces of ordnance For the old Scandinavian custom of cannon shot as an accompaniment to royal toasts see 1, 2, 127 (and note), v, 2, 286-289.

8. **doth . . . rouse:** sits up late and drinks deep.

9 **upspring.** This was a dance or a dance-movement (figure), as Steevens proved from the old play of *Alphonsus*, wrongly ascribed to Chapman (Pearson ed., III, 238):

We Germans have no changes in our dances —
An Alman and an upspring, that is all

Perhaps the upspring was identical, as Elze supposes, with the old German dance called the *hupfauf* (or *hupfauf*), i.e., 'hop-up.' We are not to suppose that the King is dancing. He might 'open the ball,' perhaps, but would hardly go capering about the chamber! *Upspring* seems to be the subject of *reels*. 'That swaggering dance, the upspring, is reeling through the hall!' (Child).

11. **kettledrum.** Douce cites Cleveland, *Fuscara* (Works, ed. 1687, p. 3): 'As Danes Carowze by Kettle-drum's'

12 **The triumph of his pledge:** the splendid feat of health-drinking in which he drains the cup at a draught.—Is it a custom? The King was holding a drinking bout, of the sort for which all Germanic nations were once famous, and the Danes especially so in Shakespeare's day. Cf. Greene, *Mourning Garment* (ed. Grosart, IX, 136). 'Thou must bring home pride from *Spaine*, lasciuiousnesse from *Italy*, gluttony from *England*, and carowsing from the *Danes*.' This custom is distasteful to Hamlet, both by nature and by education, and he does not like it any better for knowing that Claudius is drinking his health (1, 2, 123-128). Horatio's question seems rather odd, if he is a Dane (v, 2, 352). Possibly Hamlet's father had given up the custom. At all events, one cannot agree with Wilson that Ham-

let's 'Ay, marry, is't' indicates that his father 'had also indulged in heavy-headed revels'

13. **Ay, marry, is't:** Yes indeed it is. *Marry*, originally an oath ('by the Virgin Mary'), is used as a light expletive. The dramatic purpose of the long speech that follows is to make the coming of the Ghost a surprise, both to Hamlet and to the audience. There is a similar device before 1, 1, 40, and 1, 1, 126.

16. **More . . . observance:** more honourable to break than to observe.

17, 18. **east and west:** far and wide, everywhere. The phrase modifies 'traduc'd and tax'd' The Folio omits 'This . . . scandal' (ll. 17-38).—**tax'd:** taken to task, blamed.—**of:** by.

19, 20. **clip:** call (Anglo-Saxon *clypian*).—**with swinish phrase:** by calling us pigs.—**Soil our addition:** sully our title—our reputation—**indeed.** Used (as almost always in Shakespeare) in the strong sense of 'in point of fact.'

21, 22. **at height:** at the full height (the acme) of possible achievement—**attribute:** honour, reputation

23. **in particular men;** in the case of *individuals* (precisely as in the case of whole *nations*, which so far Hamlet has been considering). It is interesting to compare Hamlet's eloquent moralizing with Nashe's reflections on the same vice of drunkenness

'A mightie deformer of mens manners and features, is this vnecessary vice of all other Let him bee indued with neuer so many vertues, and haue as much goodly proportion and fauour as nature can bestow vpon a man yet if hee be thirstie after his owne destruction, and hath no ioy nor comfort, but when he is drowning his soule in a gallon pot, that one beastly imperfection will vtterlie obscure all that is commendable in him; and all his good qualities sinke like lead down to the bottome of his carroweing cups, where they will lie, like lees and dregges, dead and vnregarded of any man' (*Pierce Penilesse*, 1590, ed McKerrow, I, 205)

24. **some vicious mole of nature in them:** some natural fault which is a blemish In what follows three ways are mentioned in which this blemish may originate: (1) in their birth, i.e., by inheritance; (2) by the over-development of some natural tendency; (3) by some habit accidentally or thoughtlessly contracted.

26. **his**: its.

27. **the o'er-growth of some complexion**: the over-development of some part of their constitution. A man's *complexion* (temperament) was thought to be determined by the proportion of the four humours that existed in his physical make-up. These were called blood, phlegm, bile (red bile or choler), and black bile (or melancholy). According as one or another of these substances predominated, the man was sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric, or melancholy. If one of these four tendencies increased to an excessive degree, a fault might be the result—rashness, sloth, irascibility, or moroseness.

29. **o'erleavens**: pervasively modifies (as leaven changes dough).

30. **plausible**: pleasing, agreeable.

32. **nature's livery**: something by which the man is marked by nature. This covers both (1) any inherited peculiarity of temperament and (2) any such peculiarity as results from 'the o'ergrowth of some complexion.'—**fortune's star**: something determined by mere luck. This refers to the accidental forming of 'some habit.'

33. **Their virtues else**: all their other virtues; i.e., all their other qualities, however excellent. *Their* is Theobald's emendation for *His*.—**grace**: holiness.

34. **may undergo**: can sustain or support. Human nature is incapable of infinite goodness, but the virtues of these men come as near perfection as humanity can sustain.

35. **Shall**: will be sure to; will inevitably.—**take corruption**: be infected (in the world's opinion). The world will see only their one fault and overlook their many virtues.

36-38. **dram**: small amount; little bit.—**e'il**: evil. The Second Quarto spells the word *eale*. It is a contraction, like *de'il* for *devil*. The Quarto has *deale* for *devil* twice in ii, 2, 627.—**often**: Steevens's emendation for the Quarto reading 'of a.'—**dout**: banish, nullify (literally, do out, put out). The Quarto spells the word *doubt*; as the Folio does in iv, 7, 193.—**To his own scandal**: to the utter disgrace of the man in question. Thus the sentence sums up the whole lesson of ll. 23-36:

'That modicum of evil (in the man) often nullifies (in the world's opinion of him) the whole substantial or underlying nobility of his nature, to his own utter disgrace'

39 ff Hamlet, like Horatio, is a scholar and knows how an apparition should be addressed. He understands the danger of speaking to a spirit (see note on 1, 1, 42), and he is fully alive to the possibility that this may be a demon in his father's shape. Accordingly he begins by invoking the angels and all good spirits (the ministers or agents of God's grace) to protect him; and then, calling the apparition by his father's name, he adjures it to tell its errand. By using this form of words he avoids to some extent the danger involved in accosting it if it should be a demon; for in that case he has not, strictly speaking, addressed it at all.

40. **health**: salvation. Cf. Woodes, *The Conflict of Conscience* (ed. 1581, H11, ll. 2 v°):

So doo the Duels,
Yet of their health they alway doe dispaire

A *spirit of health* is, then, a good spirit, as opposed to a demon or *goblin damn'd*. The antithesis is carried out in the next two lines. Hamlet does not raise the question whether his father's soul is saved or lost, but whether this apparition is a spirit of good or of evil. If it is the ghost of his father, then he assumes that it has come with good intent.

42. **charitable**: good, benevolent

43. **questionable shape**: a shape (that of my father) which prompts me to question thee.

44, 45. **Hamlet . . . Dane**. There is no climax in these words. Hamlet the scholar knows that a supernatural being should be called upon by all known names that may belong to it. The theory was that the right name would force or induce it to speak. The same idea is the basis of all such invocations as that which begins the third book of *Paradise Lost*: 'Hail, holy Light,' etc.—**royal Dane**. Hamlet pauses for a moment after these words, but the Ghost says nothing, and he calls upon it passionately for an answer.

47, 48. **canóniz'd**: sanctified, i.e., buried with all sacred rites. *Canónize* was the regular Elizabethan accentuation. Cf. Marlowe, *Faustus*, I, 1 (ed. Dyce, II, 13): 'Shall make all nations to canónize us.'—**hearsed**: entombed. *Hearse* in Elizabethan English may mean 'bier,' 'monument,' or 'tomb.'—**cerements**: the waxed cloth in which the body was wrapped.

51. **may**: can.

52. **complete**. Such dissyllabic adjectives throw the accent back when the next syllable in the verse is accented. See Schmidt, *Shakespeare-Lexicon*, pp. 1413-1415. Cf. I, 5, 61; II, 2, 491; III, 2, 65, IV, 1, 1.

53. **Revisits**. A good Elizabethan form of the second person.—**the glimpses of the moon**. This suggests that the sky was broken by strips of cloud, so that the moon appeared only at intervals.

54-56. **and we fools of nature . . . souls**: and causing us (who are, in such a case, reduced to the condition of fools by our weak human nature) to agitate our frame of mind with thoughts which grasp at more than our souls can comprehend.—**we**. Common Elizabethan grammar for *us*.

57. **do**. Emphatic. Hamlet (like Horatio in I, 1, 130) thinks that the Ghost has come back to impose some duty on those who survive.

59. **impartment**: communication.

61. **waves**. So in the Second Quarto. The Folio has *wafts*.—**removed**: remote, distant.

62. **No, by no means!** Hamlet's friends still fear that the apparition is a demon. This comes out clearly in II, 69-78. Hamlet knows the danger, but is determined to take the risk: he cares nothing for his *life*, and no demon can hurt his *soul*.

65. **a pin's fee**: the value of a pin.

67. **immortal**. This, as well as many other passages, shows that Shakespeare does not mean to represent Hamlet as questioning the main doctrines of Christianity.

72. **assume . . . form**: change its shape from that of your father to a form that shall be horrible. The sense may be

brought out by pausing after *other* and emphasizing *other* and *horrible*. Horatio fears that the apparition may take a fiend's shape and drive Hamlet to suicide. Precisely the same idea is expressed in *King Lear*, iv, 6, 67-72.

Edgar Upon the crown o' th' cliff what thing was that
Which parted from you?

Gloucester. A poor unfortunate beggar.

Edgar As I stood here below, methought his eyes
Were two full moons, he had a thousand noses,
Horns whelk'd and wav'd like the enridged sea.
It was some fiend

73. **deprive your sovereignty of reason:** take away the sovereign control which your reason exercises over you; dethrone your reason.

75-78. **The very place . . . beneath.** Omitted in the Folio. The poverty of Elizabethan stage scenery made such descriptive passages necessary and thus incalculably enriched the drama. Compare the famous description of Dover Cliff in *King Lear*, iv, 6, 11-24.

75. **toys of desperation:** desperate fancies or impulses. Horatio refers to what is known as 'altitude fascination'—the impulse to throw one's self down from the edge of a dizzy height. Cf. *King Lear*, iv, 6, 22-24:

I'll look no more,
*Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong

76, 77. **motive:** moving cause. Cf. i, 1, 105, ii, 2, 587; iv, 7, 16.—**fadoms:** fathoms.

78. **waves:** beckons, with a motion towards the distance. The Folio reads 'wafts'

81. **My fate cries out.** Hamlet feels instinctively that this is the supreme moment of his life. The Ghost speaks to him, as it were, with the tongue of destiny.

82. **artire.** The same word as *artery*; here in the sense of 'sinew.'

83. **Némean.** Usually accented on the penult. To kill the lion of Nemea (a valley in Argolis) and fetch his skin was one of the Twelve Labours of Hercules.—**nerve:** sinew.

85. **lets**: hinders.

89. **Have after**: Come on, let's follow.

90. **state**: government, administration

Scene V.

The Ghost, followed by Hamlet, leaves the stage by one door at l. 86 of scene iv, Horatio and his companions follow, and the stage is left empty for a moment. Then the Ghost and Hamlet reenter by the other door. At l. 112 of scene v Horatio and Marcellus are heard calling from without, and they enter by the same door by which Hamlet and the Ghost had reentered. We are to imagine that the whole interval between the end of scene iv and l. 112 has been occupied in the attempt of Horatio and Marcellus to find Hamlet.

1. **no further**. Hamlet is still uncertain whether the apparition is a ghost or a demon.

3. **flames**: not of hell, but of purgatory, as is shown by ll. 10-13.

6. **bound**: in duty bound; obliged (in reason and charity).

12. **foul crimes**. We are not to think of Hamlet's father as a criminal. He is simply expiating the ordinary sins of mortality, which now appear to him in a more serious light than when he was alive. *Crime* is common in the general sense of 'fault,' 'sin.' Cf. l. 79; ii, 1, 43; iii, 3, 81.

16 **young**. Cf. i, 3, 7, note.

17. **thy two eyes**. The formality of this dual fits the solemnity of the Ghost's address.—**like stars . . . spheres**. Each planet (according to the Ptolemaic astronomy) was fixed in a hollow sphere concentric with the earth and revolving about it as a centre.

18. **knotted . . . locks**. Another suggestion of a detail of Hamlet's personal appearance. Cf. iii, 4, 121: 'your bedded hairs.'

19, 20. **an end**: on end.—**porpentine**: porcupine.

21. **this eternal blazon**: this proclamation or disclosure of the secrets of eternity, i.e., of the world beyond the grave.

23. If thou didst . . . love. This adjuration, with Hamlet's reply, suggests the tender affection which existed between father and son.

26. Murther? Hamlet's horrified exclamation shows that up to this time he had no definite suspicion of the truth. See i, 2, 256, note.

30. meditation: thought. Cf. *Wily Beguiled*, Prologue: 'Ile make him fly swifter then meditation.'

31. apt: ready, prompt

32. shouldst thou be: wouldst thou assuredly be.

33. rots. Thus the Folios; the Quartos read 'rootes.' The very existence of a slimy water-weed seems to be decay; it thrives in corruption and 'rots itself' through its lazy, stagnant life. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, i, 4, 44-47:

This common body,
Like to a vagabond flag upon the stream,
Goes to and back, lackeying the varying tide,
To rot itself with motion;

Otway, *The Orphan*, i, 2, 24-26:

I would be busy in the world, and learn,
Not like a coarse and useless dunghill weed,
Fixt to one spot, and rot just as I grow,

Shelley, *The Sensitive Plant*, iii, 94; 'the weeds which were forms of living death.'—Lethe: the river of oblivion, one draught of which makes the departed spirit forget his life in this world. Cf. 2 *Henry IV*, v, 2, 72: 'May this be wash'd in Lethe and forgotten'; Drayton, *Queen Isabel to Mortimer*: 'Those black weeds on Lethe banks below.'

35. my orchard: i.e., the palace garden; not merely 'a plantation of fruit trees,' as in modern usage. The word is a form of *wort-yard*.

36-38. For the death of Hamlet's father in the old story see Introduction.—process: account.—abus'd: deceived.

40. O my prophetic soul! My soul, by its abhorrence of my uncle, foreshadowed this revelation. To suppose that Hamlet had definitely suspected the murder destroys the dramatic force of the Ghost's message (l. 25).

42. **adulterate**: adulterous. Hamlet had not suspected adultery. He had been shocked and grieved by the 'o'er-hasty marriage' (which the Church regarded as incestuous), but what he now learns comes with all the horror of an unsuspected enormity. Note especially l 105.

43. **witchcraft of his wit**. Claudius, then, had a keen intellect (*wit*) and seductive gifts of mind and manner. Cf. *Othello*, ii, 3, 378: 'Thou know'st we work by wit, and not by witchcraft.' But Claudius's wit *is* witchcraft—he has bewitched the Queen.

50. **decline**: fall back.

54. **a shape of heaven**: a heavenly shape; an angelic form.

58. **soft!** See i, 1, 126, note.

61. **sécure**: unheeding; free from anxiety and suspicion (Latin *securus*, 'without care'). Cf. *King John*, iv, 1, 130: 'Pretty child, sleep doubtless and secure.' For the accent see i, 4, 52, note.

62. **hebona**: ebony, the sap of which was thought to be rank poison. So in Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, iii (ed. Dyce, I, 298), 'the juice of hebon' is mentioned as deadly.

63. **ears**. Lightborn in Marlowe's *Edward II* (ed. Dyce, II, 274, 275) boasts that he learned various secret methods of murder in Naples—'to poison flowers,' for example,

Or, whilst one is asleep, to take a quill ^
And blow a little powder in his ears

Iago uses a metaphor which recalls this passage in *Hamlet*: 'I'll pour this pestilence into his ear' (*Othello*, ii, 3, 362).

64. **leperous**. Cf. l. 72.

68, 69. **posset**: curdle, coagulate. A posset was a curdled drink made of spiced wine or ale, hot milk, grated biscuit, pulp of apples, etc. The compound was something like a custard, and was often said to be 'eaten.'—**eager**: sour, acid.

71. **bark'd**: covered (as with the bark of a tree).

72. **lazar-like**: like a leper. The word is derived from *Lazarus*, the beggar in the parable (*Luke*, xvi, 20)

75. **queen**. *Queen* is the acme of the climax, as in the King's

soliloquy (iii, 3, 55).—**at once**: all at the same time.—**dispatch'd**: instantly deprived

76. **sin**: sinfulness (in general). There is no reference to any particular deed. Cf. iii, 3, 81. 'With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May.'

77. **Unhous'led**: not having received the Eucharist (administered by the priest shortly before death).—**disappointed**: unprepared (for death), as by confession and absolution.—**unanel'd**: without extreme unction (A.-S. *ele*, 'oil').

80. **O, horrible!** In the Quartos and Folios this line is a part of the Ghost's speech. An old conjecture gives the line to Hamlet, 'in whose mouth it is a proper and natural exclamation; and who, according to the practice of the stage, may be supposed to interrupt so long a speech' (Johnson). The next line is clearly the Ghost's reply to Hamlet's exclamation.

83. **luxury**: lasciviousness.—**damned**. Dissyllabic.

85. **Taint not**, etc The Ghost does not accuse the Queen of complicity in the murder; indeed, the context seems to exonerate her in that regard. But Hamlet, when he considers the matter, is still in doubt, and he is not satisfied of her innocence until iii, 4, 30, when her words and bearing prove that she has no suspicion that Claudius is a murderer.

89, 90. **the matin**: the dawn.—**his uneffectual fire**: its fire which gives no heat and which dies out entirely and becomes of no effect as soon as day dawns. Cf. *The Distracted Emperor* (ed. Bullen, *Old Plays*, III, 170): 'As uneffectuall as the glowworms fyre'; Nashe, *Strange Newes*, 1592 (ed. McKerrow, I, 260): 'A number of Apes may get the glowworme in the night and thinke to kindle fire with it, because it glisters so, but, God wote, they are beguiled, it proves in the end to be but fools fire.'

93. **hell?** Hamlet invokes all the powers of the universe to aid him in his revenge; and he even thinks of calling upon the hosts of hell if they should be needed. Lady Macbeth expressly summons the demons of murder to assist her in killing Duncan (i, 5, 41-51).—**Hold, hold, my heart!** Before this the

Second Quarto and the Folio insert 'O fie.' The text follows Capell in omitting it. Probably it was an actor's 'gag.'

97. **this distracted globe.** He grasps his head with both hands, as if it were bursting.

98. **table:** tablet. Small ivory tablets were used for memoranda. Cf. l. 107.

99, 100. **fond:** foolish.—**recórds.** Accented on the second syllable.—**saws of books:** wise sayings extracted from books.—**forms:** ideas.—**pressures:** impressions

107. **My tables!** In his excitement, Hamlet instinctively follows habit and jots down the 'happy thought' that has occurred to him.—**Meet:** fit, proper.

110. **my word:** my motto; that which expresses the guiding principle of my life henceforth. Dover Wilson aptly compares the 'words' or mottoes of the knights in *Pericles*, ii, 2.

113. **Heaven secure him!** Thus Horatio once more expresses his fear that the apparition may be a demon. Cf. i, 4, 69 ff.

114. **So be it!** An instinctive 'Amen'

116. **Hillo . . . bird, come.** The halloo of Marcellus reminds Hamlet of the falconer's call in summoning a hawk. In what follows he speaks flippantly of the Ghost and its errand. This does not mean that he wishes to conceal the seriousness of the whole matter from his friends; for that would be idle, and the end of the scene shows that he has no such intention. Nor is this light tone a symptom of madness. It is merely revulsion of feeling after an emotional crisis. The fearful strain to which Hamlet has been subjected demands relief, and in such cases the relief may come either in tears or in laughter and reckless jesting. When he recovers his self possession, he speaks soberly and coherently (ll. 165 ff.).

127. **circumstance:** ceremony; especially, ceremonious talk

136. by **Saint Patrick.** Hamlet still speaks rather wildly, swearing by a saint whom a Dane would not be expected to adjure. There is no allusion (as some have thought) to 'blunders and confusion'; nor is it likely that Hamlet is thinking of St. Patrick's Purgatory—a cave in Ireland supposed to afford an entrance to the world beyond the grave.

137. **offence.** Hamlet's play upon Horatio's word is obvious. He picks it up and applies it in a different sense.

138. **an honest ghost:** a straightforward, honourable ghost; i.e., just what he pretends to be, and not a demon in my father's shape. The emphasis is on *ghost*.

139. **what is between us.** Later, Hamlet confides the secret to Horatio, and to Horatio alone. See III, 2, 81, 82.

140. **as you may:** as best you can.

141. **soldiers.** Trisyllabic.

147. **Upon my sword.** The hilt of his sword forms a cross, upon which each is to lay his right hand when he swears. Cf. Malory, *Morte Darthur*, x, 18 (ed Sommer, p. 442): 'He made them to swere on the crosse of a suerd'; Munday, *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington*, v, 1 (Collier's Dodsley, XIII, 82): 'by the cross of my good blade.' Sometimes the hilt was kissed when such an oath was taken (Collier's Dodsley, VIII, 424). The sword-oath in various forms goes back to ancient Germanic paganism. It is recorded of the Quadi, for instance, that, 'drawing their swords (*quos pro numinibus colunt*) they swore perpetual fealty' (Ammianus Marcellinus, xvii, 12, 21). See Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, 4th ed., I, 169, 170; III, 73; Vordemfelde, *Die Germanische Religion*, 1923, pp. 43, 44.—sworn . . . already: since 'in faith' is an oath.

150. **truepenny:** honest old boy. Cf. *The Return from Parnassus* (ed Macray, p. 101): 'What haue we heere, old truepenny come to towne?'

156. **Hic et ubique:** Here and everywhere—a wanderer's motto.

163. **pioner:** miner, digger. Pioners or pioneers were foot-soldiers who dug trenches and mines. Cf. *Henry V*, iii, 2, 91 ff.: 'How now, Captain Macmorris? Have you quit the mines? Have the pioners given o'er?'

165. **as a stranger give it welcome.** It was a point of good manners, when receiving strangers into one's house, not to question them about themselves.

167. **dreamt of** (emphatic): even *dreamt of*—your philosophy: this philosophy that people make so much of. *Philosophy*,

not *your*, is the emphatic word. It means 'natural philosophy'—what we call 'science'—which takes no account of ghosts and spirits. Cf. ii, 2, 384-385 'There is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.' For *your* cf. iv, 3, 21 ff.

172. **put . . . on.** A clear allusion to his purpose of counterfeiting madness.—**antic:** fantastic.

174. **encumb'ed:** folded, with an air of solemn importance, as of one who knows more than he cares to tell and hugs a secret to his breast

176-178. **an if: if.—be.** A common old form of the plural.—**might:** were allowed to speak.—**giving out:** utterance.—**note:** indicate.

180. **grace:** God's grace The line is an elaboration of 'So help you God'—the ordinary form of oath.

184 **commend me to you:** protest my devotion to you. The phrase means literally 'hand myself over to you.'

185. **so poor.** Hamlet alludes to his uncle's having obtained the election to the kingship which would naturally have fallen to *him*. Cf. iii, 2, 354-359

188. **still:** always.

189. **O cursed spite.** This phrase, in Elizabethan usage, was equivalent to the modern 'What an infernal nuisance!' though more dignified than our idiom. Hamlet is resolved to avenge his father, but he is too highly civilized to welcome the duty that the savage code of his nation and time imposes. Thus he differs from the stock 'revenger' in the old plays, who (in Senecan fashion) revels in bloodthirstiness.

191. **together** (emphatic) i e., as friends and equals. This is Hamlet's protest against the ceremonious respect which his companions strive to pay him. They stand back to let him go first, as if they were his attendants, but he insists on the walking by his side. Cf. i, 2, 253, 254.

ACT II. Scene I.

Between Act I and Act II the interval cannot be more than six or eight weeks. Since the departure of Laertes (i, 3, 87) time enough has elapsed for his father to think a remittance seasonable and for Ophelia to have 'repelled' Hamlet's letters and 'denied his access' to her (ll. 108-110). The interval cannot be long, for when the play begins Hamlet's father had been dead for about two months and scene ii in Act III takes place only four months after the murder (l. 136). In the meantime Hamlet has been acting the madman and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have been summoned in haste (ii, 2, 4).

1. **notes:** memoranda—**n** continuation, no doubt, of the 'precepts' in i, 3, 59 ff.

3. **marvell's:** marvellous, wonderfully. Cf iii, 2, 312

6. **Marry.** Used colloquially for 'why,' 'indeed,' or almost any similar expletive. See i, 4, 13.

7. **me.** Literally 'for me'; but used colloquially without any special significance—**Danskers:** Danes.

8. **how:** how they come to be there.—**who:** of what rank.—**means:** supply of money.—**keep:** resort.

9, 10. **finding:** if you find.—**By this . . . question:** by this roundabout means and by giving your conversation this turn. *Question* may mean either 'conversation' or 'enquiry.'

11, 12. **come.** Indicative, not imperative: 'Then you come nearer (to the information you are seeking) than you can do by any personal questions'; and Polonius proceeds to show how this may be done—namely, by making remarks that shall tempt the hearer to tell what he may have observed.—**more nearer.** Such double comparatives and superlatives are common.

19, 20. **put on him:** lay to his charge.—**forgeries:** inventions; imaginary faults.—**rank:** flagrant.

22-24. **wanton:** gay—in the modern colloquial sense; practically synonymous with 'wild.'—**liberty:** freedom from restraint.

25 **fencing**. Not discreditable in itself, but a valued accomplishment (see iv, 7, 72-103) The fencing schools, however, were frequented by wild young bloods, and to spend much time in such places might be a sign of dissipation. So Gosson, *The Schoole of Abuse*, 1579, fol. 30 r^o 'Fencing is growne to such abuse, that I may well compare the Schollers of this schoolê, to them that prouide Staues for their owne shoulders; that foster snakes, in their owne bosoms, that trust Woolues, to garde their sheepe.' Cf. Greene, *The Debate betweene Follie and Love*, 1587 (ed. Grosart, IV, 218): 'Hath not Follie inuented a thousand deuices to drawe a man from idlenesse, as Tragedies, Comedies, Dancing schooles, Fencing houses, wrastling places, and a thousand other foolish sportes?'

26. **Drabbing**: licentiousness.

28. **season it in the charge**: modify or soften the accusation in the very act of bringing it.

30. **incontinency**: immoderate indulgence in any of these wild courses.

31-35. **breathe . . . quaintly**: suggest his faults so delicately—with such delicate reticence.—**taints of liberty**: faults incident to lack of restraint Cf. l 24 —**unreclaimed**: not recalled from a state of wild nature; untamed by age and experience.—**Of general assault**: attacking everybody; to which all young men are exposed.

37, 38 **my drift**: my meaning.—**a fetch of warrant**: a warrantable device.

40. **soil'd i' th' working**: soiled by the experiences that accompany growth from youth to manhood. The figure comes from the marks that one's hands leave on delicate material.

43 **Having ever seen**: if he has ever seen.—**crimes**: faults. Very common in this general sense. Cf. i, 5, 12, iii, 3, 81.

44. **breathe of**: make these suggestions about. Cf. iii, 4, 198.

45. **He closes . . . consequence**: He will be sure to agree with you, following up your remark as follows.

47. **addition**: title; mode of address.

49. 'a: he.

50. That Polonius loses the thread of his discourse here

should not lead us to undervalue the wisdom of his advice to his son in 1, 3, 58 ff

58, 59. **o'ertook in's rouse**: surprised or overcome (by intoxication) in his drinking.—**rouse**. See 1, 2, 127, and note.—**falling out**: quarrelling.

63. **carp**. Merely used to carry out the figure with Polonian thoroughness. Any other fish would do as well.

64. **we of wisdom and of reach**: we wise and far-reaching persons. Cf. *Wily Beguiled*, 1, 2 (ed. Hawkins, III, 301): 'Thus men of reach must look to live'; Heywood, 2 *Edward IV* (ed. de Ricci, M 4 r^o). 'a iudgement of such reach.'

65. **windlasses**: roundabout ways Cf. Mabbe, *Celestina* (ed. Tudor Translations, p. 90) 'What a wind-lace hast thou fetcht, with what words hast thou come upon me?'—**assays of bias**: indirect attempts. A figure from bowling. The *bias* is the curve which the bowl makes in reaching its goal—like a 'curve' in baseball.

66, 67. **by . . . out**: by indirect means discover truths. Polonius forces the sense of *directions* a little for the sake of the formal antithesis.—**lecture and advice**: lesson and instructions.

68. **You have me**: You catch my meaning: Cf. the modern slang phrase, 'You get me?'

70. **Good~my lord!** Merely a polite phrase of leave-taking, accompanied by a bow, like the French 'Monsieur!'

71. **in yourself**: by yourself; on your own part Reynaldo is to use his own eyes and not to rely altogether on 'windlasses and assays of bias'

73. **And let him ply his music**. Merely a parting direction to Reynaldo to see that Laertes does not neglect his practice of music—an art in which every gentleman was expected to have some skill. Cf Sir Philip Sidney's letter to his brother, 1580 (ed. Arber, *An English Garner*, I, 308). 'Now, sweet Brother, take a delight to keep and increase your music. You will not believe what a want I find of it, in my melancholy time.' For Polonius, as Reynaldo is leaving the room, to call after him with this detail is true to the nature of anxious parents.

77. **closet:** private sitting room, boudoir. Cf. iii, 2, 343

78. **doublet:** a close-fitting jacket Doublet and hose (breeches) were the regular essentials of masculine attire — **unbrac'd:** unlaced. The doublet was laced or buttoned from the bottom nearly to the top. At the top it was left open for a short distance, so as to show the shirt. To leave it 'all unbrac'd' was a great disorder in attire, like leaving one's waistcoat unbuttoned now-a-days. Cf. Marston, *What You Will*, i, 1, 21 (ed. Halliwell, I, 226), where Jacomo, in love, enters 'unbraced, and careless drest.'

79. **No hat.** Hats were often worn in-doors. Ophelia would have expected to see Hamlet at the door with his hat on, but he would remove it as he crossed the threshold.—**foul'd:** soiled

80. **down-gyved:** dangling like gyves or fetters round his ankles. Cf. *Two Gentlemen*, ii, 1, 78-83: 'You chide at Sir Proteus for going ungarter'd . . . He, being in love, could not see to garter his hose'

84. **horrors.** The line appears to lack a syllable in the middle, but this was supplied by trilling the last *r* in *horrors* Furness asks, 'Why not let Ophelia's strong emotion shudderingly fill up the gap?' This confounds sentiment with metre. It might perhaps be maintained that the verse is left incomplete in order, by a kind of discord, to produce the effect of strong emotion; but it has yet to be shown that shudders can count for metrical feet.

85. **Mad.** Hamlet had already begun to 'put an antic disposition on' (i, 5, 172), and Polonius, like the King and Queen, was concerned to discover the cause (cf. ii, 2). Now he thinks he has it.

91. **As:** as if.

92. **shaking of mine arm:** shaking my arm. *Of* is often used in this participial construction.

95. **As:** that.—**his bulk:** his whole body,—literally, the trunk. Cf. *1 Jeronimo*, i, 3, 6, 7 (in Kyd, ed. Boas, p. 304): 'I haue mischiefe Within my breast, more then my bulke can hold.'

96. It is at this moment that Hamlet decides that he must renounce Ophelia and give up all thought of marriage and happiness. To involve an innocent girl in such a revenge as he contemplates would have been a crime. His study of Ophelia's face is but the long look in which he says farewell to his hopes. Some critics, however, imagine that he is trying to discover whether Ophelia is strong enough to stand by him in his plans, and that, reading weakness in her countenance, he renounces her for ever. Such a theory ignores the obvious fact that Hamlet cannot for a moment have wished to make Ophelia his accomplice in a deed of blood.

102. **ecstasy**: madness.

103 **Whose . . . itself**: which has this property when it is violent—that it destroys itself (i.e., the person who suffers from it). Cf. Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, iii, 2, 4 (ed. 1638, p. 538) "'For if this passion continue," saith Ælian Montaltus, "it makes the blood hot, thick and black, and if the inflammation get into the braine, with continuall meditation and waking, it so dries it up that madness followes, or else they make away themselves."'

112. **quoted**: noted, observed.

113. **bespew my jealousy!** plague take my suspicious nature! *Bespew* means literally 'curse.'

114, 115. **proper to**: characteristic of.—**To cast beyond ourselves**: to overshoot ourselves; to err by going too far. It is characteristic of the young not to see all there is in a matter; of the old, to see more than there is in it. Cf. Greene, *Mamillia*, 1583 (ed. Grosart, II, 110): 'You knowe olde men are verye suspitious: . . . wee are colde of complexion, and therefore fearefull by nature, and will quickely spy a padde [i.e., a toad] in the strawe, and a snake in the grasse.'

118, 119. **which . . . love**: For us to conceal it might cause the King (and us) more sorrow than he will feel displeasure at learning that Hamlet loves you. Polonius, though of very high rank, does not believe that the King and Queen will approve Hamlet's marrying Ophelia. He is mistaken, as the Queen's words prove in v, 1, 267.—**close**: secret.

Scene II.

2. **Moreover that:** besides the fact that.

5-10. The King's language shows that Hamlet's appearance and behaviour since he has begun to play the madman are very different from what they were in scene 11 of the First Act. Then he was merely sorrowful, now he looks and acts like a lunatic. The distinction was doubtless made much more striking on the Elizabethan stage than it usually is in our modern theatres. Cf. l. 150.

6, 7. **Sith:** since.—**that:** what.

11. **of:** from Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are two young noblemen who had been selected, as the custom was, to be Hamlet's playfellows when he was a small boy, and to share his studies and sports until he went to the university

12. **so . . . haviour:** so closely associated with his life and ways throughout his youth. The Folios read 'his youth and humour,' which would mean 'his actions and disposition as a young man.'

13. **vouchsafe your rest:** consent to remain.

14. **companies.** The plural of abstract nouns is common when two or more persons are thought of. So 'pleasures' in l. 28. Cf. 1, 1, 173; i, 2, 251, 254; ii, 2, 290.

16 **occasion:** opportunity

18. **open'd:** if it is disclosed The King has a bad conscience, and may feel somewhat uneasy about Hamlet's madness; but we are not called upon to see anything in his words beyond their plain meaning. The Queen is distressed at her son's condition, and Claudius is anxious to make her happy. Her request to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, we observe, is precisely the same as his.

21. **more adheres:** is more attached Both the King and the Queen overestimate Hamlet's intimacy with these two noblemen. Hamlet treats them familiarly, to be sure, but he knows better than to trust them.

22. **gentry:** courtesy.

24. **the supply and profit:** the fulfilment and furtherance

26-34. Shakespeare has purposely made Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, who always hunt in couples, indistinguishable in character, manners, and language. Their close likeness is amusingly shown in their replies, which are almost antiphonic: Rosencrantz utters a half-line, two whole lines, and a half-line; Guildenstern continues in a speech of exactly the same length and the same metrical arrangement. We note, too, the carefully regulated form of the thanks of the King and Queen, in which the names are so arranged that neither Rosencrantz nor Guildenstern shall feel that either has been more honoured than the other.

27. **of:** on, over.

28. **your dread pleasures:** your wishes as our revered sovereigns.—**into:** into the form of

30. **in the full bent:** with full intention. The figure comes from the *bending* of a bow when one takes aim.

42. This speech shows the same style of friendly compliment in which the King habitually addresses Polonius, who is a very important person at court and in Danish politics. Both the King and the Queen have a genuine affection for 'the good old man' (as the Queen calls him in iv, 1, 12). *Thou* (instead of *you*) expresses this feeling.—**still:** always.

43-45 **Assure you:** assure yourself, rest assured.—**liege:** liege lord, sovereign.—**I hold . . . king:** I regard my duty both to God and to my king as highly as I value my soul.

47. **policy:** statecraft, statesmanship

49. **lunacy.** Hamlet had begun to play the madman as soon as he appeared at court after his interview with the Ghost. His behaviour with Ophelia, then, did not first give Polonius the idea that Hamlet was mad, but merely furnished him with an explanation for his supposed madness.

52. **the fruit:** the dessert.

53. **grace:** honour. An introduction by Polonius would be more honourable to them than one by a minor court-official.

54, 55. **He tells me,** etc. The King, throughout the first part of the play, confides immediately to his wife anything that he

learns about Hamlet. This is not without importance in determining the feeling of Claudius toward his stepson.—**head:** fountain head, origin.

56. **doubt:** suspect.—**the main:** the main thing, i.e., the general subject that has occupied his thoughts of late

59. **Norway:** the King of Norway. Cf. 1, 2, 28.

60. **greetings and desires:** i.e., the complimentary good wishes with which the Danish missive began.

61. **Upon our first:** as soon as we made known our business.

65-67. **your Highness.** Common for 'your Majesty'—**griev'd:** aggrieved, offended, indignant.—**impotence:** feeble health. Cf. 1, 2, 29 —**borne in hand:** deceived. The phrase implies not merely a single act, but a systematic course of deception —**arrests:** writs of arrest, summoning him to the King's presence.

71. **To . . . arms:** to bring the question to the test of warfare.

73. **fee:** value. He gave him land which yields an income of three thousand crowns a year. The Quartos make it 'three-score thousand.'

79, 80. **On . . . set down:** on such conditions with regard to the public safety as are (in this document) submitted for your approval. *Allowance* is common in this sense.

80-82. **likes:** pleases.—**at our more consider'd time:** 'at a time when we have more leisure for consideration' (Clark and Wright).—**business.** Trisyllabic.

86-88. **My liege,** etc. Polonius begins a set speech, which has an exordium (ll. 86-105), a narrative part (ll. 106-146), and a peroration (ll. 147-151).—**expostulate:** discuss.—**Why day is day,** etc. Polonius declares that to explain the duties of subjects to their kings would be as superfluous as to define day or night.

90. **brevity is the soul of wit.** This, like many other lines of Shakespeare, has become a proverb in a sense different from that which it bears in its own context. *Wit* here signifies 'wisdom.' The whole remark means 'The wise or instructive part of every speech may be put in a few words; and what often makes wisdom tedious is the ornaments or flourishes with which it is decked out.'

95. **More matter, with less art.** Not spoken impatiently, as often on the stage. The words combine a compliment to the eloquence of Polonius with a suggestion that the Queen is eager to hear the gist of the matter. The reply of Polonius shows that he takes her remark as a compliment 'Art, madam? you do me too much honour! This is not *art*: it comes natural to me.'

104. **Thus . . . thus.** Here Polonius almost loses the thread of his discourse, as in his instructions to Reynaldo (II, I, 49).

105 **Perpend:** Mark my words and consider.

106. **have while she is mine.** The fondness for distinctions which characterizes the style of Polonius will not allow him to use even so simple a word as *have* without splitting hairs.

109-112. **To the celestial,** etc. Hamlet's love letter was written before he began to play the madman. Its stilted style has done him much harm in the esteem of modern readers. However, he is but following the fashion of Shakespeare's time. No suitor would have dreamed of beginning with so unceremonious a phrase as 'Dear Ophelia' Compare the burlesque love letter in Middleton and Rowley's *Changeling*, IV, 3 (ed. Bullen, VI, 89).—**a vile phrase.** Hamlet has used *beautified* in the sense of 'endowed with beauties'—as an emphatic synonym for the ordinary word *beautiful*. Polonius censures it as affected and also, no doubt, as suggesting artificial aids to beauty.—**bosom.** Cf. *Two Gentlemen*, III, I, 248-250. 'Women anciently had a pocket in the fore part of their stays, in which they not only carried love-letters and love tokens, but even their money and materials for needle work' (Steevens).

116 **Doubt . . . fire.** Hamlet's poetry is poor, as he himself confesses; but it was expected that every lover should show his devotion in verse.

117. **that the sun doth move:** i.e., about the earth—the centre of the system according to the old (Ptolemaic) astronomy.

118. **Doubt:** suspect.

120, 121. **ill at these numbers:** a poor hand at this verse-making.—**to reckon my groans:** to express my love sorrows in the set forms of verse.

123. **whilst . . . him:** as long as this body remains his, as long as he lives. Hamlet thinks of his body as a complicated piece of mechanism to which his soul supplies the motive power. The advance of practical invention has made the word *machine* so familiar that it sounds hopelessly prosaic, but to Shakespeare's audience it was an 'elegant' term. Wordsworth's famous phrase 'the perfect pulse of the machine' (in 'She was a Phantom of Delight'), written in 1804, has been defended on the same ground, but with less reason. The word must have appeared in questionable taste even to Wordsworth's contemporaries.

126. **above:** besides

131 **might:** could.

133, 134. **As I perceiv'd it.** Polonius (as he has told Ophelia in i, 3, 91-95) had been informed of Hamlet's suit by others. By this time, however, the old man has come to believe that he discovered it for himself.

136. **play'd . . . table book:** stored the matter away in my own mind, as one locks up letters in a desk or makes private memoranda in one's tablets or note-book.

137. **given . . . winking:** forced my heart to shut its eyes to what was going on.

138. **with idle sight:** with unintelligent or unperceiving eyes.

139. **What might you think?** Polonius implies that they could then have supposed him capable of intriguing to obtain a royal alliance for his daughter.—**round:** directly, without mincing matters. Cf. iii, 1, 191; iii, 4, 5.

140. **my young mistress:** this young lady here. Spoken with an air of affectionate jocularly.—**bespeak:** address

141. **out of thy star.** In ordinary language this would be *out of thy sphere* (as in the Second Folio). Polonius likes to substitute for the usual word one not quite so exact but more novel. Osric in v, 2, has the same trick, but carries it much farther.

142. **prescripts:** definite orders; instructions. The Folio has *Precepts*.

145. **she . . . advice:** she carried out my advice. Good ad-

vice 'bears fruit' when it is carried out in action. See note on 1, 3, 81.

147-150. In this account of the development of Hamlet's supposed madness Polonius indulges his imagination and follows the lead of his learning. Burton informs us that many authors 'make leanness, want of appetite, want of sleepe, ordinary symptoms' of the melancholy of lovers, 'and by that meanes they are often brought so low, that . . . one scarce knows them to be the same men' (*Anatomy of Melancholy*, III, 2, 3, 1, 4th ed., 1632, p. 509).

148. **watch**: sleeplessness. What we should call *insomnia*.

149 **declension**: decline, downward course (from bad to worse).

150. **raves**. Once more we have a clear distinction between Hamlet's melancholy in 1, 2, and his present supposed lunacy. See note on II. 5-10

153-155. **Hath there been . . . otherwise?** A clear instance of Polonius's falling into dotage. The King's reply should not be spoken impatiently, but with indulgent courtesy.

159 **the centre**: the earth's centre, which was also the centre of the universe according to the Ptolemaic astronomy.

160. **four hours**. *Four* was used for an indefinite number, as we say 'three or four' Cf. our use of *forty* and *forty thousand*. Many examples of this use of *four*, etc. (which is very old and not confined to English) are collected by Elze.¹ Cf. *Winter's Tale*, v, 2, 148; *Henry V*, v, 1, 43. Malone's example from Webster's *Duchess of Malfy*, iv, 1, 10 (ed. Lucas, II, 89), 'She will muse foure houres together,' is alone enough to show that Hamner's emendation, *for*, is unnecessary.

163. **arras**: tapestry hanging on a frame at a little distance from the wall.

165 **thereon**: on that account. *On* and *upon* are very common in this causal sense.

170. **board**: accost, address.—**presently**: instantly; without delay.—**give me leave**. A courteous phrase of request for the

¹*Jahrbuch der Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft*, XI (1876), 288-294.

departure of the King and Queen. It means 'permit me to be alone,' and so 'leave me.'

172. **God-a-mercy:** thank you. The phrase originally meant 'God have mercy!' but it became confused with *giamercy*, itself a corruption of the Old French *grant merci*, 'much thanks.'

174. **You are a fishmonger.** All sorts of attempts have been made to wring an occult sense out of this wild speech. Coleridge fancied that Hamlet means 'You are sent to fish out the secret.' But it is the business of fishmongers to sell fish, not to catch them. The remark is, in fact, merely a bit of Hamlet's pretended insanity. For him to call the elegantly dressed, dignified, and over-refined courtier—the pattern of all that is elaborate in manners—a fish-seller was the very maddest thing that he could say. The audience, too, would be infinitely amused by the presumed effect of such an announcement on Polonius himself. He receives it, however, with an indulgent smile.

182 a **god.** Warburton's emendation for 'a good' (Folio, Quarto). He cites *Cymbeline*, III, 4, 166, where the sun is called 'common-kissing Titan' Malone adds *King Edward III*, II, 1, 438, 439 (ed. Tucker Brooke, *Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p 79).

The freshest summers day doth soonest taint
The loathed carrion that it seemes to kisse.

On the ancient theory that the sun breeds maggots see Tilley, *Modern Language Review*, XI (1916), 462-464.

185. **Let . . . sun:** Keep her at home, away from the temptations of public resorts Cf. Gosson's warning to ladies to avoid the publicity of the theatres: 'We walke in the sun many times for pleasure, but our faces are tanned before we returne' (*The Schooll of Abuse*, 1579, Shakespeare Society ed., p 49). Hamlet uses *conception* in the sense of 'intelligence' or 'quickness of understanding,' and then proceeds to pun on the word. Cf. Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, III, 6, 5-9; Middleton, *More Dissemblers besides Women*, II, 3, 80, 81 (ed. Bullen, VI, 412):

Sure if you prove as quick as your conceit,
You'll be an excellent breeder.

187. **How say you by that?** Not 'What do you mean by that?' but 'What do you say to that?' A triumphant exclamation, like 'I told you so!' *By* in the sense of 'concerning' is very common.—**Still:** always.

195. **the matter.** Polonius means, 'What is the *subject matter* of the book?' But Hamlet chooses to take *matter* in the sense of 'the subject of a quarrel,' as if Polonius had said 'What's the row?' The joke is a very cheap one—well-worn in Elizabethan usage—and thus seems all the madder, since Hamlet was not in the habit of using stale witticisms

204 ff. **honesty:** honourable conduct. Hamlet means that, although all these things are facts, yet it is not fair to mention them in satirizing old men, since the old are not to blame for their age. If they could 'walk backward,' they would quickly return to a time of life when none of these gibes would be true. For the crab's supposed gait, which had become proverbial, cf. Webster, *The Duchess of Malfy*, I, 1, 355 ff. (ed. Lucas, II, 46).

•
Like the irregular Crab,
Which though't go backward, thinks that it goes right,
Because it goes its owne way

--should be: would undoubtedly be.—old: only as old.

211. **pregnant:** ready, quick-witted.

212 **happiness:** felicity; cleverness (of phrase or idea).

220 **withal.** At the end of a sentence or clause *withal* is often equivalent to 'with.'

223 **These . . . fools!** This fling may or may not be heard by Polonius, who is on his way out. Anyhow, Hamlet, whose normal manners are very courteous, feigns madness by being as rude as he can. Nobody takes offence at his rudeness, for all accept it as a symptom of insanity

231. **As . . . earth:** like the general run of mortals.

235. **Neither:** not that either

240 **strumpet.** Fortune is so called proverbially (as in II, 2, 515; *King John*, III, 1, 61: cf. *Henry V*, V, 1, 85; *Lear*, II, 4, 52; *Cymbeline*, III, 1, 31), because she grants favours to all men and is constant to none. Cf. Chaucer, *Troilus*, I, 843, 844.

Woost thou nat wel that Fortune is comune
To every manere wight in som degree?

241. **the world's . . . honest.** A stock joke. Cf. *I Jeronimo*, i, 3, 91, 92 (in Kyd, ed. Boas, p. 307):

Isabella. What newes, Ieronimo?

Ieronimo Strange newes Lorenzo is becom an honest man

250. **Then is the world one.** Cf. *The Return from Parnassus*, iii, 5 (ed. Macray, p. 126):

Why the wide world that blesseth some with wayle,
Is to our chayned thoughts a darkesome gayle,

Richard II, v, 5, 20, 21.

The flinty ribs

Of this hard world, my ragged prison walls

251. **A goodly one:** a fine spacious one.—**confines:** cells.

258. **your ambition.** They suspect that Hamlet's secret trouble is disappointment at not having succeeded to the throne, and on this matter they insist on sounding him throughout the interview. Hamlet soon discovers their theory, and he teases them by giving them some ground for thinking they are right, but no clear evidence

264 ff. **Which dreams,** etc Hamlet has intentionally wandered from the point which Rosencrantz is trying to investigate, and Guildenstern rather skilfully brings him back to it. The result, however, is simply a quibbling dialogue on the general subject of ambition. Thus Hamlet outwits his cross-examiners.

270, 271 **Then . . . shadows.** This is simply an instance of that paradoxical reasoning in which the wits of Shakespeare's time delighted. Guildenstern has said, in effect, that ambition is merely a shadow, Hamlet argues as follows: 'If ambition is a shadow, our monarchs and heroes, who are entirely composed of ambition, must be shadows, and our beggars, the only persons in the world who have no ambition, must alone be composed of real substance. If, now, the beggars are the only

real bodies, and the monarchs and heroes are shadows, then the monarchs and heroes must be the shadows of the beggars, since there cannot be a shadow without a real body to cast it.' *Outstretch'd* suggests the fantastic length of a man's shadow. The hero seems very tall, but he is in fact only the ludicrously elongated shadow of some quite ordinary beggar.

272. **faith**: *faith* (Old French *fei*, modern *foi*)

273. **wait upon you**: escort you

274. **No such matter!** No such thing! Not at all! As usual, Hamlet declines to allow his friends and associates to call themselves his servants. See 1, 2; 162-163, 253-254.—**sort you with**: associate you with; put you in the same class with.

275, 276. **I am most dreadfully attended**: My attendants are a very poor lot.

278. **what make you?** what are you doing? (as in 1, 2, 164) Hamlet appears to remember that he has neglected to ask the customary question. In reality, he is skilfully introducing, as if it were a mere 'by-the-way,' a cross-questioning which elicits from Rosencrantz and Guildenstern a confession that they *were* sent for.

280-282. **Beggar that I am**. This is intended to foster their belief that Hamlet is suffering from disappointed ambition — **too dear a halfpenny**: too dear at the price of a halfpenny. His thanks are worthless, he implies, since he has no power in the state.

284. **justly**: honestly.

286. **What should we say?** Being unprepared for Hamlet's questioning, they betray themselves at once by their hesitation.

290 **your modesties**. For the plural cf. II 14, 28, I, 1, 173.

292-298. **To what end?** For what purpose? Why should we be sent for?—**That**. Emphatic—**consonancy**: harmony; undisturbed friendship.—**by what . . . withal**: by anything more sacred still that a better talker might urge in appealing to you. *Propose* in the sense of 'talk' is common.—**withal**: with. Cf. I. 220 —**even**: frank.

301. **of you**: on you.

304-306. **So . . . feather**: Thus my answering my own ques-

tion in advance will head off your 'confession, and so your promise of secrecy will not be broken in the least. *Prevent* in the sense of 'forestall' and *discovery* in the sense of 'disclosure' are both common.

307. **mirth**: cheerfulness.

308-310 **frame**: fabric, structure.—a **sterile promontory**: a barren, rocky point jutting out into the sea of eternity. By a similar metaphor Macbeth speaks of human life as 'this bank and shoal of time' (1, 7, 6).—**brave**: splendid.

311. **fretted**: adorned with fretwork—like the ceiling of a magnificent hall. Clark and Wright compare Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, II, 14, 9. 'If that great Workmaster had been of an human disposition, he would have cast the stars into some pleasing and beautiful works and orders [i e., patterns], like the frets in the roofs of houses, whereas one can scarce find a posture [i e., arrangement] in square or triangle or straight line amongst such an infinite number'

313, 314. **a man**. Some editors follow the Fifth Quarto and omit *a*, but the article is needed. Hamlet's meaning is not 'What a masterpiece is *mankind*!' but 'Look at *a man*, and see what a masterpiece he is!' It is the individual, not the race, that is in his mind, as the rest of the sentence proves. In l. 322 *man* is right, for there the negative is universal. 'No man delights me.'—**infinite in faculties**. Cf. Marlowe, *Tamburlaine*, II, 7, 21-25.

Our souls, whose faculties can comprehend
The wondrous architecture of the world,
And measure every wand'ring planet's course,
Still climbing after knowledge infinite,
And always moving as the restless spheres

—**express**: precisely adapted to its purpose—like a delicately adjusted piece of mechanism

317. **this quintessence of dust**: this finest extract or sublimation of dust.

328-330. **what lenten entertainment**: what a poor reception.

—**coted**: passed.

333. **the adventurous knight**: the knight errant, wandering

in search of adventures. He was a common figure in certain Elizabethan dramas of an old-fashioned type which were the lineal descendants of the mediæval *romans d'aventure*. Good examples are Heywood's *Four Prentices of London* and the equally ludicrous *Sir Clyomon and Sir Clamydes* (written, perhaps, by Thomas Preston, the author of *Cambyzes*). This class of plays is ridiculed in Beaumont and Fletcher's famous burlesque, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. See Schelling, *Elizabethan Drama*, 1908, I, 198-208.

334, 335. **target:** a small shield.—**the humorous man:** the eccentric man; the man with a dominant whimsey—another stock character in Elizabethan plays. A good example is Jaques in *As You Like It*, whose 'humour' or peculiar whim is satirical melancholy. The Elizabethan age, which gave every encouragement to individuality, abounded in what we call 'odd characters,' and the 'comedy of humours' was in high favour on the stage. Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour* and *Every Man out of his Humour* illustrate the extreme development of this form of drama.

338. **whose lungs . . . sere.** As we might say 'whose risibilities have hair triggers.' The *sere* or *sear* is a part of the mechanism of a gun-lock, if it is *tickle* (delicately adjusted), the gun goes off at a touch. Cf. Nicholas Breton, *Pasquil's Fooles-Cap*, 1600, st. 9.

And if thou chaunce to meete an idle Mate,
Whose tongue goes all too glibbe vpon the seare,
And chiefe delight is so much in his prate,
As where hee comes, will be chiefe Prater there

The lungs are often mentioned as the instruments of laughter. Cf. *As You Like It*, ii, 7, 30-33:

My lungs began to crow like chanticleer
That fools should be so deep contemplative,
And I did laugh sans intermission
An hour by his dial

338, 339 **the lady . . . for't:** The lady shall speak her mind freely (as ladies like to do), even if that should spoil the regularity of the metre.—**halt:** lump.

344. **Their residence:** their remaining at the capital as a resident company.

346, 347. **their inhibition . . . innovation.** What hinders them (from remaining at the capital) is the new fashion. Hamlet, who has been absent from Denmark at the university, does not know what this new fashion is, as his next speech proves, and Rosencrantz explains the novelty consists in having companies of boys act in public. All attempts to make the inhibition refer to any of the numerous decrees of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London prohibiting plays within the city limits have failed; nor does the context favour any such interpretation.

354, 355 **an eyrie:** a nest or brood—used only of birds of prey.—**eyases:** young or nestling hawks.—**cry . . . question:** shriek out their speeches in a key above that of natural talk—referring to the 'childish treble' of the youngsters' voices. *Question* often means 'talk' or 'conversation.' Cf Armin, *A Nest of Ninnies*, 1608 (Shakespeare Society ed., p. 55). 'They cry it up in the top of question.'—**tyrannically:** boisterously. The stage tyrant was a proverbially noisy and violent character. Cf. Bottom's wish in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, i, 2, 30-32: 'My chief humour is for a tyrant. I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.'

356. **berattle . . . stages:** In their plays these children berate the adult theatres, which they style contemptuously 'the common stages.' Cf Chapman, *All Fools*, iii, 1 (Pearson ed, I, 148): 'Let me, then, schoole him, foot, ile rattle him vp'; Fletcher, *The Humorous Lieutenant*, iv, 1 (ed Dyce, VI, 493): 'I never was thus rattled'—**the common stages.** So in Middleton's play, *The Phoenix* (acted by the 'Children of Paules'), an adult actor is called 'a common player' (i, 4)

359, 360. **many . . . thither:** many gentlemen are so much afraid of satirical pens that they hardly dare visit an ordinary theatre lest the world think them behind the times. The *goose-quills* are the pens of the poets who, in writing plays for the child actors, insert speeches berating 'common stages' as unfit to be patronized by any person of taste.

362 ff **escoted**: supported (financially).—Will they pursue the quality, etc.: Will they give up the stage when their voices change? If not, they must become 'common players' in course of time, and then they may well blame their authors for having put into their mouths satirical attacks on their own *succession*, i.e., on what they themselves are going to be by-and-by—the **quality**: the (actor's) profession.

369. **much to do**: much ado, a great hubbub.—on both sides. The grown-up players had retorted by satirizing the child actors.

370–373. **tarre**: egg on, incite. Cf. *King John*, iv, 1, 116, 117:

And, like a dog that is compell'd to fight,
Snatch at his master that doth tarre him on

—**argument**: plot —**question**: dialogue. For a time no play was saleable unless it embodied a quarrelsome dialogue between a Poet and a Player (on the subject of the grown-up actors and the children's companies)

376. **carry it away**: carry off the booty; get the victory.

377. **Hercules and his load too**. The load of Hercules is the globe, which he bore upon his shoulders to relieve Atlas while Atlas fetched the apples of the Hesperides. The meaning is that the boys 'have won the whole world of playgoers,' 'they carry all before them'; but there may be (as Steevens thought) an allusion to the Globe Theatre and its sign, which is said to have been Hercules with his load (the globe) on his shoulders.

378, 379. **my uncle**, etc. Hamlet is still encouraging the theory of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern that his madness is due to disappointed ambition.—**mows**: grimaces, faces (French *moues*). The Second Quarto reads *mouths*. Cf. iv, 4, 50.

384, 385 **his picture in little**: a miniature of him —'Sblood: by God's blood. Hamlet, in his rôle of madman, startles his companions by this tremendous oath, which fits the style of a swaggering ruffian. Cf. iii, 2, 386.—**philosophy**: science

387. **Your hands**. Another bit of mad action. Hamlet gives a welcoming hand to his friends at the end—rather than the beginning—of their long conversation

389-391 **comply** . . . **garb**: use compliments (or ceremony) with you in this style.—**my extent**: my display of cordiality. See ll 440 ff. *Extend* in the sense of 'show' is common — **show**: appear — **entertainment**: welcome

395. **In what?** Spoken eagerly, for now at last Guildenstern thinks Hamlet is about to tell what ails him; but the next speech 'is as baffling to the cross-questioners as ever

397. **I know a hawk from a handsaw**. A proverb 'I can distinguish between things that do not resemble each other at all', 'I have some little common sense and discrimination' Some think the proverb was taken from the sport of falconry and was originally 'to know a hawk (i.e., a falcon) from a *hernshaw* (a heron)', but it has not been found in that form, and the corruption, if there be one, is probably older than Shakespeare's time. The speech sounds to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern like mere raving, but the audience understands Hamlet's hidden meaning: he is sane enough when the circumstances are suitable. He has, in fact, given few signs of insanity in the preceding dialogue, but as soon as Polonius enters he talks as wildly as in his previous conversation with the old courtier (ii, 2, 172 ff)

402 **Happily**: haply, perhaps

403 **an old man . . . child**. Cf Latimer, *Second Sermon before Edward VI* (ed Arber, p. 56). 'Al old men are twise chyldren, as the Prouerb is *Senex bis puer*. An olde manne, twyse a child.'

406, 407 **You say right . . . indeed**. Addressed to Rosencrantz, in order to seem to be deep in conversation when Polonius comes up.

409. **I . . . you**. The pronouns are not emphasized Hamlet simply repeats the words of Polonius, mimicking his tone — **When Roscius . . . Rome**. Since Roscius lived in Cicero's time, the remark might well inform Polonius that his news is stale news; but the old man takes it as mere madness and goes on with the speech which Hamlet has interrupted

412 **Buzz**: chatter! A rude exclamation signifying that Hamlet takes no interest in what Polonius says, and perhaps

also that his news is old news. Blackstone reports that *buzz* was once in use at Oxford 'when any one began a story that was generally known before.' *Buzzers* for 'idle talkers,' 'gossips,' 'busybodies' occurs in iv, 5, 90. To *buzz* is common in the sense of 'to speak idly or deceitfully.' Cf. Chapman, *The Widow's Tears*, ii, 1: 'Thinke 'twas but a Buzz [i.e., an idle tale] deu's'd by him to set your brains a-work, and diuert your eie from his disgrace'

414. Then . . . ass. Spoken, or chanted, as if it were a line from an old song

415 ff. *tragedy, comedy, etc.*: Polonius begins well. His first five terms are quite sober, and he very properly distinguishes the pure pastoral (like Guarini's *Pastor Fido* or Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess*) from such plays as *As You Like It*, which are comedies with a pastoral admixture. *Tragical-historical*, too, is an acceptable term for what we call 'historical tragedy' (like *Macbeth* or *Julius Caesar*) as distinguished from 'history' (like *King John* or *Henry IV*). But the old man's tongue runs faster than his thoughts, and he ends his catalogue with a preposterous four-story adjective that never fails to bring down the house. See Textual Notes.

417, 418. *scene . . . unlimited*: dramas that observe the unities of place and time and also those which give no heed to such limitations. The Elizabethan critics were inclined to restrict the place and time in a drama in accordance with what they thought to be Aristotle's rules. Cf. Sidney, *The Defence of Poesy*, ed Cook, p. 48: 'The stage should always represent but one *place*; and the uttermost *time* pre-supposed in it, should be, both by *Aristotle's* precept and common reason, *but one day*.' Sidney goes on to ridicule the changes of place that the English playwrights allowed

. . . You shall have Asia of the one side, and Afric of the other; and so many under-kingdoms, that the player, when he comes in, must ever begin with telling where he is, or else the tale will not be conceived. Now, you shall have three ladies walk to gather flowers, and then we must believe the stage to be a garden. By-and-by we hear news of shipwreck in the same place, and then we are to blame if we accept it not for a rock. Upon the back of that, comes out a hideous monster with fire and smoke, and

then the miserable beholders are bound to take it for a cave, while, in the mean time, two armies fly in, represented with swords and bucklers, and then, what hard heart will not receive it for a pitched field?

Shakespeare almost always wrote plays with 'scene unlimited,' but he was well aware of the so-called rules, and in *The Tempest* he has given us a specimen of what he could do when he chose to observe them. The action of that comedy is confined to one day and the place to a single island—though with some minor shifts.

418-420. **Seneca.** The favourite classical tragedian in Shakespeare's time. His plays had a profound effect on the English drama—**Plautus.** The plot of *The Comedy of Errors* comes in the main from the *Menaechmi* of Plautus, but there is also substantial borrowing from his *Amphitruo*. Latin classical plays were often performed at the universities and public schools, both in the original and in translation. Polonius, like Hamlet, was a 'university man' (see iii, 2, 104 ff.).—**the law of writ:** plays composed according to the rules of writing—those that observe the three unities (of time, place, and action).—**the liberty:** plays which show complete freedom from such restrictions. Polonius is summing up what he has already said.—**only:** uniquely excellent.

421. **Jephthah.** See *Judges*, xi. The song (identified by Steevens) is one of a large class of Scriptural ballads. It was entered in the Stationers' Register in 1567 or 1568 and again in 1624 (Arber, I, 355; IV, 131) and occurs in a seventeenth-century black-letter broadside, in the Roxburghe collection, III, 201 (ed. Ebsworth, VI, 685, 686). The first stanza runs as follows in a manuscript copy of about 1600 (*Shirburn Ballads*, ed. Clark, p. 175):

I read that, many yeares ago,
When Jeph[th]ah, Judge of Israel,
Had one faire Daughter, and no moe,
Whom he beloued passinge well,
And as by lot, God wot
It came to passe, most like it was,
Great warres there should be,
And who should be chiefe but he, but he.

424. **What treasure had he?** Polonius knows what the answer must be. He is humouring the supposed madman. Besides, he expects more evidence in support of his theory as to the cause of Hamlet's insanity.

427. **passing:** surpassingly.

428. **Still:** always. Cf. I 187

432 **that follows not.** Polonius understands this to mean 'That doesn't *logically* follow,' and takes the remark for mere insanity. There is no deep meaning in the passage: Hamlet is talking madly.

438. **row:** stanza.

439. **my abridgment:** the players, who cut short my quotation. If it were not for them, I would recite more of the 'pious chanson' for you.

440. **masters:** gentlemen.

442, 443 **valanc'd:** hanging with a beard. An old-fashioned bed had not only curtains attached to the bedposts and enclosing the sleeper, but also a 'valance'—drapery that hung from the bedstead to the floor.—**to beard me.** Cf. *Macbeth*, v, 5, 6 'We might have met them dareful, beard to beard.'

443, 444 **lady.** Said to the boy who acted young women's parts. No actress appeared on a public stage till the revival of the theatre after the Restoration; but ladies of rank often played in masques at court.—**mistress:** madam.

445. **chopine:** a kind of wooden stilt, sometimes a foot or eighteen inches in height, placed under the sole of a woman's shoe to increase her stature. Chopines were much worn in the East and in Venice, and the fashion made some progress in England in the seventeenth century. See Bulwer, *Anthropo-metamorphosis*, 1653, pp. 550, 551; Fairholt, *Costume in England*, ed Dillon, 1885, II, 72, 73, and fig. 37. Cf. Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, iii, 1 (ed. Bullen, II, 50).

Tysefew. Dost not wear high cork shoes—chopines?
Crispinella. Monstrous ones

446. **crack'd.** A coin would not pass if it had a crack extending from the edge to a point inside the circle that surrounded the monarch's head or other device. Hamlet's pun is clear

enough. He hopes that the boy's voice is not so cracked as to spoil its *ring*—that it is still 'as clear as a bell'

447, 448 **We'll e'en to't:** We'll just go at it — **French falconers.** Famous for their skill and for the excellent training of their falcons. George Turbervile credits the material of his elaborate *Booke of Faulconrie*, 1575, to two Italian and six French falconers.—**fly . . . see:** let the hawk fly in quest of any bird in sight; undertake anything, no matter how difficult.

451. **your quality:** your professional ability. Cf. l. 362.—**passionate:** emotional

456. **caviary to the general:** a delicacy not appreciated by the general run of playgoers.—**caviary:** caviare—a Russian relish made of sturgeon's roe. It was a novelty in England in Shakespeare's time, and fondness for it was an 'acquired taste.' Nicholson quotes Nicholas Breton, *The Court and Country*, 1618 (D3, lf. 2).

This [a Porpouse Pye] was one of your fine dishes. Another, a great Lady sent him, which was a little Barrell of *Cauary*, which was no sooner opened and tasted, but quickly made vp againe, was sent backe with this message, Commend me to my good Lady, and thanke her honour, and tell her we haue black Sope enough already; but if it be any better thing, I beseech her Ladyship to bestow it vpon a better friend, that can better tell how to vse it

458-470. **cried in the top of mine:** were more authoritative than mine; literally, called out with a louder voice than mine. Cf. l. 355.—**set down:** written, composed.—**modesty:** moderation; artistic restraint; freedom from extravagance.—**cunning:** skill — **sallets:** salads; hence, figuratively, highly seasoned or spicy passages.—**affectation.** The Folio reading The Second Quarto has *affection*, which means the same thing — **honest:** gentlemanly; in good taste — **wholesome:** sound and clear.—**more handsome than fine:** elegant, but not gaudy or over-decorated.—**Priam's slaughter.** See *Æneid*, II, 506 ff.

472 ff Whether the passages that follow are actually quotations from some lost tragedy is an insoluble question. Probably not. At all events, there is no satire involved. To make the recited passages sound like histrionic recitation ('a fiction and a dream of passion') they must be sharply distinguished

from the blank-verse speeches in HAMLET itself; and this effect of declamation (as contrasted with natural passion) is produced by overcharging the style. The contrast is strengthened by putting the actual dialogue of the scene in prose. See A. W. von Schlegel, *Sammliche Werke*, ed. Bocking, VI, 251.¹

472. *th' Hyrcanian beast*: 'th' Hyrcan tiger' (*Macbeth*, III, 4, 101). Cf. 3 *Henry VI*, I, 4, 155; *Æneid*, IV, 367 ('Hyrcanæ tigris'). Hyrcania was a wild region in Asia

473. *begins*. Emphatic. Though Hamlet has misquoted the passage, he has still made a good verse. We are thus prepared for his proposal in ll. 565 ff:

474 ff As Steevens observed, there is a strong resemblance between the style of this speech and the language in which Marlowe tells the same story in his *Tragedy of Dido*, Act II. Note particularly his description of Pyrrhus (ed. Dyce, II, 387):

At last came Pyrrhus, fell and full of ire,
His harness dropping blood, and on his spear
The mangled head of Priam's youngest son,
And, after him, his band of Myrmidons,
With balls of wildfire in their murdering paws,
Which made the funeral flame that burnt fair Troy.

476. *couched*: hidden — *horse*. See *Æneid*, II, 13 ff.

478, 479 *dismal*: ill-omened — *gules*: the heraldic term for 'red.' — *trick'd*: adorned. Another heraldic word. Lines 479–486 afford a good example both of the power of this passage and of its intentionally overcharged style

481, 482. *with*: by means of. — *parching*. The city was on fire — *tyrannous*: savage, ferocious.

484, 485. *o'ersized*: glued over. — *coagulate*: coagulated, clotted — *like carbuncles*. The carbuncle was thought to emit light by its own nature Cf. Hawes, *Pastime of Pleasure*, XI, 33:

Carbuncles in the most darke nyght
Dothe shyne fayre with clere radiant beames

¹ 'Was in dem Schauspiele selbst wieder als dramatische Dichtung erscheinen sollte, musste gegen dessen würdige Poesie so wie theatralische Erhöhung gegen die einfache Natur abstechen'

491. **His antique sword:** the sword which he had wielded long ago in his youth. See 1, 4, 52, note. Cf. *Æneid*, II, 509-511.

Arma diu senior desueta trementibus aevo
Circumdat nequiquam umens, et inutile ferrum
Cingitur, ac densos fertur moriturus in hostes

495. **the whiff and wind.** Cf. *Tróilus and Cressida*, v, 3, 40, 41:

When many times the captive Grecian falls,
Even in the fan and wind of your fair sword

—**fell:** cruel, fierce.

496 **unnerved:** feeble in sinew. Cf. Marlowe, *Tragedy of Dido*, II (ed. Dyce, II, 388):

Whereat he lifted up his beârd limbs,
And would have grappled with Achilles son,
Forgetting both his want of strength and hands,
Which he disdaining, whisk'd his sword about,
And with the wind thereof the king fell down

—**senseless:** having no feeling.—**Ilium.** Used in the mediæval sense of the *arx* (citadel) of Troy, not for Troy as a whole

498. **his:** its.

499. **Takes . . . ear.** Here the overcharging of the style is unsuccessful, and the effect is that of bombast.

503. **like . . . matter.** *His will* means 'his purpose'; *his matter*, 'the accomplishment of his purpose' As a neutral stands idle between two parties, so Pyrrhus paused midway between his purpose and its fulfilment

505 **against:** just before.

506. **rack:** clouds Dyce quotes Bacon's *Sylva Sylvarum*, § 115: 'The winds in the upper region, which move the clouds above, which we call the rack.' Cf. *Tempest*, iv, 1, 156.

507. **the orb below:** this round earth—'Tellus' orb'd ground' (iii, 2, 166).

509. **the region:** the sky; the air. Cf. l. 606.

511. **Cyclops'.** The Cyclopes were the gigantic workmen of Vulcan (*Hephaestus*), the god of smiths' work and the manufacture of armour.

512. **for proof eterne:** 'to stand the test forever.

513. **remorse:** pity, compassion.

515. **Out.** An interjection of contempt and abhorrence — **strumpet Fortune!** See note on l 240

517. **fellies:** the 'rim' of the wheel.—**nave:** the hub — **her wheel.** The allegory of Fortune's wheel is current under two forms, both known to Shakespeare. In the strictly classical form, Fortune is represented as riding on her wheel, which turns constantly. A variation is seen in the conception of Fortune as standing 'upon the rolling restless stone' (*Henry V*, III, 6, 31). The second form, popular in the Middle Ages and later, represents Fortune as sitting by a wheel which she turns by means of a crank. On this wheel are mortals, who are therefore sometimes rising, sometimes at the summit, and sometimes declining or at the very bottom of their fate. It is this latter figure which Edmund has in mind in *King Lear* (v, 3, 174) when he says, 'The wheel is come full circle; I am here,' i.e., 'I began life at the very bottom, I have risen to the summit of prosperity; and I have now descended to precisely the same insignificance at which I began' See Patch, *The Goddess Fortuna*, 1927, Chapter V

521. **It shall . . . beard.** Hamlet, who has been deeply moved by the Player's tragic speech and action, is naturally irritated at Polonius's criticism, and retorts with the freedom which madness allows: 'Too long' 'So is your beard! We'll send them both to the barber's together' To Polonius this rude gibe sounds like insanity, for it stands in marked contrast to Hamlet's well-known courtesy of speech and manner (see note on l. 223) Besides, like other jests which Hamlet makes when talking with Polonius, it is a stock joke, and therefore quite beneath Hamlet's dignity as a witty man Cf. Middleton, *The Mayor of Queenborough*, III, 3 (ed Bullen, II, 56).

Call in the barber — If the tale be long,
He'll cut it short, I trust, that's all the hope

522. **a jig:** a comic dialogue (or short farce) in song, much like some of the 'turns' in our vaudeville shows (cf III, 2,

132) Jigs were a favourite form of entertainment on the stage and often followed the performance of a play. Cf. *Pasquil and Katherine* (ed Simpson, *The School of Shakespeare*, II, 150): 'The Iigge is cal'd for when the Play is done.' Most of the old jigs are lost. For discussion and specimens see Baskerville, *The Elizabethan Jig*, 1929 Cf W J Lawrence, 'The Elizabethan Stage Jig' (*Pre-Restoration Stage Studies*, 1927, pp. 79 ff.)

525. **mobled**: muffled. The word is unusual and strikes Hamlet as odd. Polonius, however, admires it just because it is unusual. He also wishes to soothe Hamlet's irritation by finding something to praise in the Player's speech

529 **bisson rheum**: blinding tears — **a clout**: a cloth.

531. **o'erteemed**: worn out by childbearing

534 **state**: government of the world.

539 **Unless . . . at all**: unless the Epicurean doctrine be true, that the gods live in unruffled calm and are never disturbed by sympathy for mankind.

540, 541 **milch**: flowing with tears; literally, yielding milk. — **eyes**: the stars — **passion**: strong emotion.

542, 543 **wher**: whether — **in's**: in his

545-550. **bestow'd**: lodged and otherwise provided for — **abstract**. Always a noun in Shakespeare — **you were better**. *You* is originally dative in this idiom: 'It would be better for you' It was felt as a nominative, however, and 'I (*thou*, *he*) were better' was used instead of *me* (*thee*, *him*). Cf a similar confusion in 'if you like,' which meant originally 'if it like (i e., please) you.'

552. **I will use them**, etc. Polonius means this as a compliment, for he has already expressed his admiration for these players.

553, 554. **God's bodykins**. A common grotesque oath. *Bodykins* means 'little body,' i e., 'the host' or 'consecrated wafer.' Such vulgar swearing, being foreign to Hamlet's usual talk, helps to convince the Danish court that he is really mad Cf. l. 384; iii, 2, 386 — **after**: according to

562. **The Murther of Gonzago**. No such drama is known,

nor is it likely that it ever existed apart from the tragedy of HAMLET. Plays within plays, however, were common—as in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Tempest*, Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, and Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle* and *Four Plays in One*. See W. J. Lawrence, *Englische Studien*, XXXIII (1904), 384-403

566. **dozen or sixteen lines.** Much ingenuity has been wasted in identifying Hamlet's dozen or sixteen lines, as if we were to suppose that Shakespeare wrote *The Murder of Gonzago* without them and then inserted them somewhere!

570 **mock him not.** Another indication of Hamlet's courtesy. He himself can poke fun at Polonius, for his mockery will pass as madness and is therefore not an insult. But it would be quite another thing for the players to make sport of the old nobleman, and Hamlet is alive to the temptation they might feel to follow his own example, especially since they may not have heard of his supposed madness.

574. **Good my lord!** Spoken with a low bow, as a courteous phrase of leave taking. Cf. II, 1, 70.

576. **rogue:** poor creature; wretched fellow.

578-580. **dream.** Emphatic.—**passion:** strong emotion.—**Could . . . conceit:** could force his soul into such accord with his conception (of the part he played) that, by the operation of his soul (upon his bodily powers), his whole face grew pale

581-583. **aspect.** Accented on the second syllable.—**his whole function:** all the powers of his body—i e., all those that operate to express emotion. Cf. *Macbeth*, I, 3, 140, 141: 'Function Is smother'd in surmise'—**forms:** appearances (such as those mentioned in ll. 580-582).—**his conceit:** his conception of the part.

584. **For Hecuba:** Priam's wife, whose passionate grief is described in ll 525 ff.

587. **the motive:** the moving cause, the incentive. Cf. I, 1, 105; I, 4, 76; IV, 7, 16

590. **Make mad . . . free:** by his description of the crime he would drive those spectators mad who had any such sin on their conscience, and would horrify even the innocent.

591. **the ignorant**: those who had not intelligence enough to comprehend the actor's words—the 'groundlings,' for example, who (as Hamlet says in iii, 2) are unable to understand anything but pantomime and noise.—**amaze**: paralyze, stun. Cf. iii, 2, 339, iii, 4, 112.

594, 595. A dull . . . rascal: a stupid and poor-spirited wretch. *Mettle* (the same word as *metal*) is often used for one's 'material' or 'quality,' and so for one's 'spirit' or 'temper.'—**peak Like John-a-dreams**: go moping about like one in a dream. To *peak* is, literally, to 'pine away,' as in *Macbeth*, i, 3, 23: 'Shall he dwindle, peak; and pine.' *John-a-dreams* (i.e., 'of dreams') was a more or less proverbial name for a dreamy, absent-minded fellow Collier quotes Armin, *A Nest of Ninnies*, 1608 (Shakespeare Society ed., p. 49): 'His name is John, indeede, saies the cinnick, but neither John a nods, nor John a dreames.'—**unpregnant of my cause**: with no real sense of the cause to which I should be devoted, heart and soul. Cf. *Measure for Measure*, iv, 4, 22, 23:

This deed unshapes me quite, makes me unpregnant
And dull to all proceedings

597, 598. **property . . . life**: all that he possessed. He was robbed of his crown, of his queen—ay, of his very life!—**defeat**: destruction.

598 ff. **Am I a coward?** Hamlet rages against himself for stupid inactivity—not for hesitation or weakness of will. He has done nothing to avenge his father and seems incapable of doing anything. Why? Not, surely, because he is a coward! Yet even *that*, he exclaims, with bitter irony, is possible: otherwise he must have killed his uncle long ago. Thus he relieves his excitement by railing until, at the end of the soliloquy, he grows calm and expresses in the plainest language what the matter really is: *he needs evidence*. He must not kill a man on the word of an apparition, and thus far no other testimony has been procurable. He is angry at what he thinks his own stupidity and he calls upon his brains to go to work. They have, indeed, obeyed him before he spoke: 'The play's the

thing!' It will force the King to confession, and then Hamlet can act when once he 'knows his course.'

600 **beard.** The play contains several hints of Hamlet's personal appearance. We have already learned that he has 'knotted and combined locks' (1, 5, 18) and that he is not a Hercules (1, 2, 153)

601, 602. **gives me . . . lungs?** 'You lie in your throat' was a greater insult than simply 'You lie,' because it implied that the lie was deliberate and not a casual lip-falsehood. 'As deep as to the lungs' is, then, 'in the superlative degree.' Cf. Webster, *The Devil's Law-case*, iv, 2, 643 (ed. Lucas, II, 306): 'He give the lye in the stomacke—that's somewhat deeper then the throat'; *The Birth of Merlin*, ii, 2, 99 (ed. Tucker Brooke, *Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p. 360): 'Thou liest beneath thy lungs'; Heywood (Pearson ed., IV, 160): 'Hee lies below his entrayles.'

603. **'Swounds:** by God's wounds—our 'Zounds.'

604. **pigeon-liver'd.** The supposed gentleness of the dove was explained in the old physiology on the theory that it had no gall and hence no bitterness or capacity for resentment. 'He has no more gall in him than a dove' says Viola of her patient husband in Dekker's *Honest Whore* (Pearson ed., II, 10).

606. **the region kites:** the kites of the air. Cf. l. 509.

608. **Remorseless:** pitiless. Cf. l. 513.—**kindless:** unnatural.

610. **brave:** fine, noble.

611. **father.** First supplied in the Third Quarto (1611). See Textual Notes.

612. **by heaven and hell.** Heaven prompts him to revenge because his uncle deserves death; hell, because he is actuated by anger and hatred.

613. **unpack:** unload, relieve.

615. **scullion.** So the Folio. The Second Quarto reads 'stallion.' No misprint is easier. Wilson accepts *stallion* in the sense of 'a male courtesan.' For *scullion* (kitchen wench) applied to a railing woman see 2 *Henry IV*, ii, 1, 65.

616. **About:** Go to work!

617-620. **guilty creatures . . . malefactions.** Several anecdotes

of this kind were current. The German *Hamlet* (*Der Bestrafte Brudermord*) contains at this place such a story about a woman who had murdered her husband. Heywood, in his *Apology for Actors*, 1612 (G-G2), tells of two such occurrences, one of which he says happened at Lynn in Norfolk when Lord Sussex's company was playing there, the other at Amsterdam during a visit of the English comedians.

618, 619. **cunning of the scene:** the skill with which the play was acted.—**presently:** instantly; on the spot.

621, 622. **For murther . . . organ.** The doctrine that 'murder will out' is strongly asserted in Chaucer, *The Nun's Priest's Tale*, B 4240 ff. (ed. Robinson, p. 240):

O blisful God, that art so just and trewe,
Lo, how that thou biwrest mordre alway!
Mordre wol out, that se we day by day.
Mordre is so wlatom and abhomynable
To God, that is so just and resonable,
That he ne wol nat suffre it heled be.
Though it abyde a yeer, or two, or thre,
Mordre wol out, this my conclusoun

625. **tent:** probe.—**blench:** flinch.

626 ff. Coleridge (*Shakespearean Criticism*, ed. Raysor, I, 28) aptly quotes Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*, I, 37 (ca. 1635): 'I believe . . . that those apparitions and ghosts of departed persons are not the wandering souls of men, but the unquiet walks of devils, prompting and suggesting us unto mischief, blood, and villany.' A fine outspoken case of the belief that the devil may take the shape of a dead man occurs in *Every Woman in her Humour*, 1609 (ed. Bullen, *Old English Plays*, IV, 359, 360). See also Kyd, *Cornelia*, III, 1, 128-147 (ed. Boas, pp. 125, 126); Tourneur, *The Atheist's Tragedy*, III, 2 (ed. Nicoll, p. 218).

630. **As he is:** as [well may be the case, for] he is. The elliptical use of *as* is very common.—**such spirits:** such conditions of one's temperament. Cf. Fletcher, *Women Pleased*, III, 4:

I am not mad,
Nor does the devil work upon my weakness;

The Night Walker, iii, 2, 5, 6:

They say spirits appear
To melancholy minds, and the graves open.

631. **Abuses:** deceives, deludes (by appearing in the likeness of my father and falsely accusing my uncle of murder).—**to damn me:** by persuading me to kill an innocent man.

632. **More relative:** referring back more surely from the evidence to the fact—hence, more positive and cogent, more conclusive. The First Quarto reads: 'I will haue sounder proofes.' Cf. D'Avenant, *The Platonic Lovers*, v (ed. 1872, II, 98):

He doth proceed on grounds so relative
As would persuade the wisest to a jealousy.

ACT III. Scene I.

1. **by no drift of circumstance:** by no turn which you could give to the conversation (cf. i, 5, 127; ii, 1, 10). Thus the Folio; the Second Quarto reads 'conference.'

2. **puts on this confusion:** acts in this distracted way. *Puts on* means simply 'clothes himself with,' and does not suggest (as in modern usage) something *assumed* or *counterfeited*. Such figures from clothing are remarkably common in Shakespeare.

12. **disposition:** mood; inclination at the time (not, general disposition). Guildenstern is no fool, and he has seen the effort which it costs Hamlet to be cordial.

13, 14. **Niggard . . . reply:** He was not inclined to conversation, but he talked very freely in answer to any questions we asked. *Free* does not imply that Hamlet gave satisfactory answers (cf. II. 5-10).—**question:** talk (not, interrogation).—**demands:** questions. The word does not carry any suggestion of peremptoriness.

14, 15. **assay . . . pastime:** try to attract him to any sport or amusement, in order to relieve his mind.

17. **o'erraught:** overtook and passed.

23 **the matter**: the subject matter, i.e., the performance.

24. **content**: please. Claudius is genuinely eager to live at peace with his stepson for two reasons—his own safety, and his love for the Queen, who is naturally distressed by the present situation. It is only after he learns that Hamlet knows of the murder, and that there can be no peace between them (that is, after the play within the play), that he takes measures to destroy Hamlet.

29 ff. Here again (as in ii, 2) the King confides his plans with respect to Hamlet to the Queen.—**closely**: privately.

31-35. **Affront**: meet face to face — **espials**: spies.—**bestow ourselves**: station ourselves.—**encounter**: meeting, interview.—**frankly**: freely — as he is **behav'd**: according as he behaves himself.

40-42 **So shall I hope**, etc. This conveys to Ophelia and her father a suggestion that the marriage which Polonius had thought impossible (ii, 2, 141, 142) would be quite agreeable to the King and Queen.

43 **Gracious**: my gracious lord.

44, 45. **bestow ourselves**: take our places [behind the arras]. — **book**. A prayer book (see l. 89) or some book of devotion, as the word *exercise* (for 'religious exercise') suggests. Cf. l. 48 — **colour**: give a specious (colourable) pretext to

46, 47 **to blame**: blameworthy, culpable. Polonius does not mean that Ophelia is doing wrong. He simply moralizes the situation in a general way. A young woman with a prayer book, but not praying, is a good emblem for the hypocrisy of us mortals.—**prov'd**: found true by experience

49-54 **'tis . . . burthen!** This remark of the King's is an aside and is therefore perfectly sincere: it is, in fact, a thought, not a speech. Claudius, like Macbeth, has sinned hideously under the influence of temptation, and his conscience, like Macbeth's, torments him incessantly. Herein he differs from such deliberate villains as Iago and Edmund (in *King Lear*). His words prepare us for the wonderful scene (iii, 3) in which he tries in vain to repent and makes a hopeless attempt to pray.

52. *to*: in comparison with The haggard cheek under the paint is ugly in contrast with the paint that beautifies it

56-88. In this famous soliloquy Hamlet is often thought to be dallying with the purpose of suicide as a means of escape from his duty. But this view overlooks the facts of the situation and does violence to Hamlet's own words. He has formed his plan to make the King betray himself, has written his 'dozen or sixteen lines,' and is eager to try the crucial experiment. Meanwhile there is a wearisome interval in which he can do nothing but wait for nightfall. Inaction brings depression of spirits, and the 'thought recurs to him that death would be a relief. All men have such thoughts at such moments, and to all men—as to Hamlet—they lead to the further reflection that every one has, the power of life or death in his own hands. But reflections are not purposes. By *the question* Hamlet does not mean 'the question for me to decide now, in my own case,' but rather the question which, as it seems to him, must sooner or later force itself upon every man. 'Is it nobler to live miserably or to end one's troubles by a single stroke?' The answer, he says, would be obvious if death were only a sleep. The whole course of his argument is general, not personal. He is not suffering from the scorn of the world, the law's delay, or the insolence of office.

57 *in the mind*. This modifies *nobler*, not *suffer*: 'Does it show a nobler quality of mind to submit or to resist?'

59, 60. *to take arms*, etc. When troubles come like an on-rushing sea, suicide is like the act of a warrior who runs to meet the waves, sword in hand, thus opposing them until they close over his head and his troubles are ended. Ingleby compares Abraham Fleming's translation of Ælian, xii, 23 (*A Registre of Hystories*, 1576, fol. 127 v^o):

Some of them [1 e., of the Celts] are so bouldre or rather desperate, that they throw themselves into y^e fomey floudes with their swordes drawne in their handes, and shaking their lauelines, as though they were of force and violence to withstand the rough waues, to resist the strength of the streame and to make the floudes affraide least they should be wounded with their weapons.¹

¹ See also *New Shakspere Society Transactions*, 1887-92, pp. 49*-52*.

63. **a consummation**: a final settlement of everything Cf. Montaigne, *Essays*, III, 12 (Florio's translation, ed. 1603, p. 627): 'If it be a consumation of ones being, it is also an amendement and entrance into a long and quiet night. Wee finde nothing so sweete in life, as a quiet rest and gentle sleepe, and without dreames.'

65 **the rub**: the impediment, the difficulty A metaphor from bowling. A *rub* is any obstruction which hinders or deflects the course of the bowl

67 **shuffled . . . coil**: disentangled ourselves from the tumult of human affairs *Coil* carries not only the sense of 'turmoil' (the only sense in Shakespeare elsewhere) but probably also, as 'shuffle off' suggests, that of 'something that entangles us' — 'is coiled about us' (like a rope) These two uses of *coil* are really different words of distinct derivation, but in Shakespeare's time they must have been regarded as the same word in two strangely different senses.

68. **respect**: consideration Cf. III, 2, 193.

69 **of so long life**: so long-lived; so lasting If it were not for this impediment, Hamlet argues, no one would endure calamity long

70 **time**: the times, the world we live in.

72. **The pangs . . . love**. Cf. John Heywood, *The Play of Love*, ll. 62, 63 (ed. Brandl, *Quellen*, p. 162): •

Of all paynes the most incomparable payne
Is to be a loue not louyd agayne

—**déspis'd**. For the accent see I, 4, 52, note. For *despis'd* (Second Quarto) the Folio reads *dispriz'd*.

75 **his quietus make**: settle his own account. *Quietus est* is an old formula for 'He is quit'; 'his account has been settled' The phrase (as well as the noun *quietus*) was common in the sense of 'death wound.' Thus in Fletcher, *The Chances*, II, 1, Antonio, wounded by Don John, says: 'H'as given me my *quietus est*.' In the present instance the word suggests the quiet of sleep and the grave There is an old proverb: 'He that dies pays all debts' (*Tempest*, III, 2, 140). Cf. *1 Henry IV*, III, 2, 157: 'The end of life cancels all bands' (i.e., bonds).

76. **a bare bodkin:** a mere stiletto or poniard.—these fardels: these burdens. The Second Quarto omits 'these'

77 **grunt:** groan Not an undignified word in Elizabethan times. Cf. Dekker, *The Gull's Horn-Book*, 1609 (ed. Grosart, II, 216): 'sicke gruntinge patients'

79. **undiscover'd:** unexplored—therefore, mysterious —**bound:** boundary. Cf. Marlowe, *Edward II* (ed. Dyce, III, 288).

Weep not for Mortimer,
That scorns the world, and, as a traveller,
Goes to discover countries yet unknown

80. **No traveller returns.** Critics have worried over this, since, they remark, the Ghost had returned. But Hamlet is thinking of human beings, not of ghosts—**puzzles:** confounds—so that it cannot act.

83. **conscience.** Here again Hamlet is speaking in general terms, not thinking especially of himself. Blakeway cites *Richard III*, I, 4, 137 ff., where the Murderer complains that conscience 'makes a man a coward. A man cannot steal, but it accuseth him; a man cannot swear, but it checks [i.e., rebukes] him . . . It fills a man full of obstacles' Cf. the same, v, 3, 180, 310 A less probable interpretation takes *conscience* to mean 'that of which we are conscious'. 'It is this knowledge that makes us all cowards' (Child).

84. **And thus.** Hamlet is speaking still more generally. He has abandoned the theme of suicide and the life after death, and is extending his observations to the whole subject of *irresolution* as caused by *fear of the consequences* of any act. This does not apply to him in particular, for nobody has suggested that he is *afraid* to strike the King. He is merely philosophizing, as he has already done in I, 4, 23-38—a passage which no sane critic regards as having a personal application—**native.** The natural complexion of resolution is ruddy or sanguine.

85 **cast:** shade (of colour)—**thought:** melancholy, despondency. Cf. iv, 5, 188.

86. **pith:** importance. The Folio reading. The Second Quarto reads *pitch*, i.e., 'height,' 'elevation'—especially, 'the highest

point reached by a soaring falcon.' Cf. *Richard II*, 1, 1, 109: 'How high a pitch his resolution soars!'

87. **With this regard**: on this account.

88. **Soft you now!** Hold! Hush! Cf. 1, 1, 126.

89. **Nymph**. A courtly way of addressing a lady, not uncommon in the old language of compliment. Cf. l. 44

91. **many a day**. This (like 'long' in l. 94) indicates that some time has elapsed since 1, 3, 132-136. The interval has not been long, though it may seem so to Ophelia.

92. **well, well, well**. Apparently the repetition is meant to express low spirits—not (as Dowden thinks) impatience or (as Wilson suggests) indifference.

95. From this point Hamlet talks as insanely as he knows how. Ophelia replies with the gentle firmness which one might use to a refractory child, until Hamlet's feigned madness grows so distressing that she can only pray to heaven for his relief. No doubt Hamlet suspects that somebody is listening, and he cannot afford to take chances. Whether or not Ophelia is acting under instructions, it is necessary that she should share the general opinion that he has lost his mind. Indeed, it is far more merciful to her to confirm that impression than to let her think that he is sane and does not love her. As for taking her into his confidence, that is manifestly impossible. He cannot think for a moment of making her his accomplice in a deed of blood. Love and marriage are not for him until his revenge is accomplished. If ever he emerges triumphant from the difficulties that surround him and takes his seat upon the throne of Denmark, explanation will be easy enough.

103. **honest**: chaste

109. **commerce**: intercourse, association.

111-115. **translate**: transform—**his**: its.—**sometime**: once; formerly.—**now . . . proof**. Hamlet is thinking of his mother's sin, which well might make him feel that there is no purity left in the world.

117. **Indeed . . . so**. The actress who plays Ophelia should not turn this gentle and spirited rejoinder into a wail of misery.

119. **cannot so inoculate our old stock:** cannot, by grafting, so change our sinful nature (inherited from Adam) that we shall not still have some flavour of it. The figure is that of a crabtree (a wild apple) in which a bud or shoot of a better sort has been set as a graft. The fruit, Hamlet says, will still taste of the old stock. Cf. *Coriolanus*, II, 1, 205, 206:

We have some old crabtrees here at home that will not
Be grafted to your relish

121. **I was the more deceived.** See note on l. 117. Ophelia has no doubt of Hamlet's love, nor should this line be so rendered as to indicate that she has. His madness is what distresses her.

123. **indifferent honest:** tolerably virtuous

125. **ambitious.** Whether or not Hamlet suspects that Ophelia is a decoy, or that there are listeners, he is prudent enough to encourage the notion that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern had formed—that thwarted ambition is the cause of his madness (II, 2, 258). Soon, however, he assigns another cause (l. 152). The result is confusion, which is what he designed.

133, 134. **We: we men.—Go thy ways:** Go along; literally, on your way. Cf. I, 3, 135.

134. **Where's your father?** An awkward question for Ophelia, but she does not hesitate to give the only possible answer. She must not reply, 'My lord, he is behind the arras.' Hamlet, she thinks, is insane, and she is acting under the orders of those whom she regards as most interested in his cure. Hence she does not scruple to treat him, in this matter of telling the truth, as madmen must often be treated. Nor has Hamlet any reason to be angry with Ophelia, even if he knows that Polonius is behind the arras; for, by counterfeiting lunacy, he has forfeited the right to be treated as sane. It is possible that he has seen the arras shake, or even that he has caught sight of Polonius for a moment. Note, however, that in what follows he treats Ophelia no more harshly than before. Indeed, he merely follows the train of thought already begun in l. 122 ('Get thee to a nunnery!'). As to the stage action, however, one thing is certain. Polonius undoubtedly shows his head for

a moment to the audience, for such is the regular convention when a character is in hiding—whether behind the hangings, or behind a screen, or in a chest. And he must withdraw his head precipitately when he hears Hamlet's question—to the amusement of the audience, who are further diverted by realizing that the old courtier must hear himself called a fool. The comic effect would be heightened if Hamlet had his back turned to Polonius when the head appeared. On the whole, then, we may feel reasonably certain that Hamlet does not see Polonius but has merely a vague suspicion that he is within earshot.

145 **monsters.** Alluding to the favourite Elizabethan jest of the horns supposed to grow upon a man's head if his wife is unfaithful. Cf. *Othello*, iv, 1, 63: 'A horned man's a monster and a beast'

148. **your paintings:** i.e., those of you ladies in general. Painting the face appears to have been an almost universal fashion amongst Elizabethan ladies, and the dramatists and satirists are never weary of attacking it. Here, in what follows, Hamlet is talking about women in general, and it never occurs to Ophelia to take his words as meant for her in particular: they are too absurdly inapplicable. Her only feeling is sorrow at his pitiable condition.

150 ft. jig . . . **amble.** Two kinds of affected gait. Cf. *The Return from Parnassus*, iv, 1, 1353, 1354 (ed. Macray, p. 67): 'Each mincing dame, Each ambling minion.'—**lisp:** applied to any kind of affected softness of pronunciation. Cf. Chaucer's famous lines (*Prologue*, 264, 265)

Somewhat he lipped, for his wantownesse,
To make his Englissh sweete upon his tonge

—**you nickname . . . ignorance:** You give new and affected names to ordinary things (instead of 'calling a spade a spade') and then pretend that this affectation of yours is due to ignorance—that you really do not know what these vulgar objects are called. *Wantonness* often means 'affectation'; as, for example, in Elyot's *Governour* (ed. Croft, I, 35): 'Omittinge no letter or sillable, as foliishe women often times do of a

wantoness.'—*moe*: *more*. Not a clipped form of *more* but another formation from the same root

156. *all but one*. The audience (but not Ophelia) knows that Hamlet means the King. Probably the three words are uttered in a whisper, inaudible to the listeners behind the arras.

158-162. This passage proves that Hamlet is not naturally of a melancholy temperament. Ophelia dwells not only on his intellectual accomplishments but on the charm of his manners and address. He is courtier and soldier, as well as scholar. In short, he is the first gentleman of Denmark. For *soldier* cf. v, 2, 406-411

159. *The courtier's*, etc.: the courtier's eye, the scholar's tongue, the soldier's sword. The order of words is a favourite one in the Elizabethan fine style. See Textual Notes.

160, 161. *Th' expectancy . . . state*: the hope and the adornment of our country, which is made fair by him.—*fair*: prophetic. Cf. *Macbeth*, i, 6, 1-3.—*glass*: mirror.—*the mould of form*: 'the model by whom all endeavoured to form themselves' (Johnson). *Form* refers especially to deportment, courtly behaviour.

162. *of*: by.

163. *deject*: cast down.

165. *most sovereign*. Since the reason should govern all the faculties. Cf. Ford, *The Broken Heart*, iv, 2 (ed. Gifford and Dyce, I, 288, 289):

Depos'd the empress of her soul, her reason,
From its most proper throne

166. *jangled*. Cf. Fletcher, *The Pilgrim*, iv, 3, 4, 5:

Like bells rung backward,
They are nothing but confusion and mere noises.

167. *blown*: full-blown, in full blossom. This is decisive as to Hamlet's age. His youth has come to full flower—he is arrived at early manhood. Cf. Mabbe, *The Rogue* (ed. *Tudor Translations*, I, 164): 'Her yeeres were rather shorter, then full seventeene, being so well growne in the bud, that she was now ready for the blowing.'

168. **ecstasy**: madness.

170. **affections**: feelings, inclinations. Cf. Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, II (ed. Dyce, I, 276):

Be thou void of these affections,
Compassion, love, vain hope, and heartless fear.

172. **madness**. The King is always uncommonly keen. Hamlet acts the madman well enough to deceive the others, but Claudius is not quite convinced, and henceforth he is tormented by the fear that Hamlet's insanity is assumed for some sinister purpose.

174, 175. **doubt**: fear.—**prevent**: forestall.

177. **to England**. The quick-witted and resourceful King has already formed a plan to get rid of the possibly dangerous Hamlet for a season. It does not appear, however, that he yet intends him to be killed on his arrival. That idea comes later, when he has learned (from the play within the play) that Hamlet knows about the murder. We do not hear of this purpose until IV, 3, 60-70. If it were now in the King's mind, that fact would be revealed to the audience in a soliloquy or an aside.

180, 181. **variable objects**: the variety of sights incidental to travel.—**something-settled**: somewhat settled. Cf. III, 2, 79. —**matter**: subject of thought.

182, 183 **Whereon . . . himself**: the constant beating of his brains on which subject (whatever it is) makes him act unnaturally. The subject of *puts* is not *brains*, but the whole idea in the phrase 'whereon his brains still beating.'

184. **It shall do well**: It will be certain to help. The King's prescription of foreign travel is, in fact, a good one, and neither Polonius nor the Queen sees anything objectionable or suspicious in it.

186. **neglected**: that met with no response.

191 **round**: outspoken (without mincing matters).

193. **find him not**: do not discover his secret trouble.

Scene II

This scene comes in the evening of the same day as scene 1: namely, on the day after 11, 2. See 11, 2, 565.

1 ff. Hamlet's advice to the players has always been understood—and rightly—to embody Shakespeare's own views on the art of acting. These are distinguished by moderation and common sense—not by novelty. The marvel is, the *style*.

2. *trippingly*: easily—i.e., without exaggerated emphasis or any excessive deliberation or roundness of utterance; with an approach, therefore, to the language of real life.—*mouth* it. To *mouth* a word is to hold it long in the mouth before allowing it to pass the lips. 'Stagey' declamation is, amongst other things, distinguished by this dwelling on the vowel sounds.

3-14. *live*: *lief*.—*the town crier*. Since the town crier wishes to be heard distinctly at some distance, he must mouth his words, and the result is a kind of loud singsong.—*temperance*: self-control, moderation.—*robustious*: boisterous. Cf. *Henry V*, iii, 7, 159: 'robustious and rough.'—*periwig-pated*. Actors of course wore wigs, but these were not the fashion in society.—*the groundlings*: spectators who sat or stood in the pit (called 'the yard'), which was the cheapest place in the theatre. Cf. Dekker, *The Gull's Horn-Book*, 1609 (ed. Grosart, II, 247): 'Your Groundling . . . buyes his sport by the penny.'—*capable of*: able to appreciate.—*inexplicable dumb shows*. The dumb show (a scene of action without words) was an important element in early plays, but was losing caste when Shakespeare wrote. For examples, see the Third Act of *Lochrine*. Such pantomimes, Hamlet intimates, appeal more strongly to the groundlings, who enjoy guessing at puzzles, than to the *élite*, who take the drama seriously. Hamlet does not condemn dumb shows in general, but only such of them as are 'inexplicable'—such as rather confuse one and disturb the attention than illuminate the plot.—*noise*. Cf. Heywood, *Love's Mistress*, iv (Pearson ed, V, 146): 'The Vulgar are best pleas'd with noyse and showes.'

15. *Termagant* . . . *Herod*. In the Middle Ages all Moham-

medans were thought to be idolaters, and the romances give them, as deities, Termagant (or Tervagant), Mahound, etc. *Mahound* is *Mohammed*, but the origin of *Tervagant* is unknown. Since the Saracens were regarded as a ferocious race, their gods were described as violent in word and deed. The god or fiend Termagant seems to have been a character in certain old English plays (now lost), and his part was undoubtedly acted with plenty of sound and fury. Bishop Bale in his *Actes of English Votaries* (quoted by Ritson) speaks of certain persons as 'grennyng' (i.e., grinning savagely) 'like termagauntes in a playe' (Part II [1550]; ed. 1560, sig. Oiiii, lf. 1 r^o). Herod was, of course, a well-known character in the English Biblical dramas, and his part was that of a raging tyrant. Thus in a Coventry pageant Herod exclaims, 'I stampe, I stare, I loke all about,' and we have the stage direction 'Here Erode ragis in the pagond [i.e., on the wagon on which the play was acted] and in the strete also' (Thomas Sharp, *A Dissertation on the Pageants*, 1825, p. 107).

18 ff. too tame, etc. Cf. Heywood, *Apology for Actors*, 1612, C3 r^o.

It [acting] instructs him [the scholar] to fit his phrases to his action, and his action to his phrase, and his pronunciation to them both. . . . And this is the action behoouefull in any that professe this quality [i.e., acting], not to vse any impudent or forced motion in any part of the body, no rough or other violent gesture, nor on the contrary, to stand like a stiffe starcht man, but to qualifie euery thing according to the nature of the person personated for in oueracting trickes, and toying too much in the anticke habit of humors, men of the ripest desert, greatest opinions, and best reputations, may breake into the most violent absurdities. I take not vpon me to teach, but to aduise, for it becomes my Iuniority rather to be pupild myselfe, then to instruct others.

21-25. **modesty:** moderation.—**from.** Emphatic 'away from'; 'contrary to.'—**at the first:** i.e., when the art of acting was first invented.—**to hold . . . nature.** 'Nowe,' say the imagined defenders of plays, according to Gosson's *Schoole of Abuse* (1579), 'are the abuses of the worlde reuealed, euery man in a playe may see his owne faultes, and learne by this glasse to amende his manners [i.e., his morals]' (sig. B5, 1 r^o).

—**feature**: form—literally, 'make.'—**the very age and body of the time**: the times exactly as they are. A person's general appearance is determined in the main by two things—his *age* and his *body* (i.e., his form or 'build') Cf. Cicero, in his oration in defence of Roscius of Ameria (16, 47). 'Etenim haec conficta arbitror a poetis esse, ut effectos nostros mores in alienis personis expressamque imaginem vitae cotidianae videremus.'—**his**: its.—**pressure**: shape—literally, impression, as in wax.

31-33. **come tardy off**: not executed with sufficient spirit and vigour.—**the unskilful**: the injudicious or indiscriminating among the audience. *Skill* for 'judgment,' 'discrimination,' is common.—**the censure of the which one**: the opinion of a single one of whom —in your allowance: in winning approval of your acting. *Allow* frequently means 'approve.'

35. **not to speak it profanely**. Hamlet apologizes for his apparent flippancy in comparing the Creation with the work of a master mechanic and his journeymen. Cf. Dekker, *Northward Ho*, iv, 1 (Pearson ed., III, 45). 'Here's a swaggering fellow, sir, that speaks not like a man of Gods making'; *As You Like It*, III, 2, 216: 'Is he of God's making?'

39. **abominably**. Spelled *abominably* in the Folios and Quartos. The word was thought to be derived from *ab homine* and carried the special sense of 'in a way contrary or repellent to what is natural in man.' See *Love's Labour's Lost*, v, 1, 27, 28.

40. **indifferently**: pretty well. Cf. III, 1, 123.

43-50. **clowns**: rustic fellows and buffoons.—**speak no more**, etc. The Elizabethan clowns used to improvise freely, and sometimes even to engage in conversation with the audience. At this point the First Quarto gives specimens of such 'gagging': 'Cannot you stay till I eate my porridge?' and, you owe me a quarters wages: and, my coate wants a cullison. and, your beere is sowre.'—**there be of them**: there are some of them.—**quantity**: small quantity. Cf. III, 4, 75; v, 1, 293 —**barren**: dull, stupid.—**villanous**: vulgar.—**fool**: actor who plays the fool's (i.e., jester's) part (with an obvious pun).—

uses: practises.—**make you ready:** dress; put on your costumes.

52. **presently:** at once. Cf. II, 2, 170.

58. **sweet.** Very common merely in the sense of 'dear.'

59 **just.** Often used in the sense of 'exact,' 'accurate.' Hamlet means that Horatio is a 'well-balanced person,' 'a symmetrical character.' What follows is a fine description of this philosophical and unruffled student

60 **conversation:** association.—**cop'd withal:** dealt with. The whole clause means 'as ever I have associated with.'

63. **révénue.** Accented on the second syllable

65. **candied.** Cf. *1 Henry IV*, I, 3, 251, 252

Why, what a candy deal of courtesy

This fawning greyhound than did proffer me!

—**ábsurd.** For the accent cf. I, 4, 52, note.

66. **pregnant hinges:** readily moving (supple) joints.

67 **thrift:** thriving, prosperity, worldly advantage.

68. was . . . **choice:** had the power of discriminating.

74-76. **blood and judgment:** impulse and discretion. Men who act on mere impulse or who, on the other hand, deliberate until the right moment is past, are alike exposed to the caprices of Fortune.—**To sound what stop she please:** to play upon as she likes; to treat as her caprices dictate. Horatio possesses both impulse and judgment in a well-balanced combination. Thus he neither acts over-hastily, nor delays when action is needed. For *stops* cf. II 372-376.

78. **in my heart of heart:** in the very heart of my heart. An emphatic repetition of 'in my heart's core'

79 **Something too much of this.** Hamlet feels that his frank praise of Horatio has gone so far as to be embarrassing to them both. *Something* is adverbial, like *somewhat*. Cf. I 359; III, I, 181

81 **circumstance.** Collective. We should now use the plural.

82. **have told thee.** Thus we learn, for the first time, that Hamlet has told Horatio the Ghost's story.

84. **with . . . soul:** with observation so keen as to absorb

every faculty of thy soul. Not merely Horatio's *mind*, but his *whole soul*, is to concentrate its powers in the single act of watching the King.

85. *occulted*: craftily hidden

86. *in one speech*: the 'dozen or sixteen lines' which Hamlet had written for the express purpose (II, 2, 566).

87. *a damned ghost*: a demon—not my father's spirit. Cf. II, 2, 626-631.

88. *my imaginations*: i.e., my belief in my uncle's guilt and in the other dreadful things which the apparition told.

89. *stithy*: forge, smithy. *Stith* means anvil. Since Vulcan is the god of smiths, his forge must be sooty above all others.

92. *In censure of his seeming*: in passing judgment on his appearance and behaviour. Cf. I, 3, 69.

93. *If he steal aught*. Once more Horatio replies with a touch of mild humour. See note on I, 1, 19. We observe that, as he has shared Hamlet's scruples about the apparition (I, 4, 69-74), he agrees with him that a test is necessary.

95. *idle*: foolish or insane in my words and actions. Cf. III, 4, 11. Hamlet never feigns madness when he is alone with Horatio, who is in his confidence. Here he expressly tells his friend that it is time to act the madman again, since the others are coming

97. *cousin*: nephew. The King does not call Hamlet *son* (as in I, 2, 64), not wishing to irritate him

99. *the chameleon's dish*, etc. When I ought to be on the throne myself, can I be satisfied with such promises as you have made me? Cf. II. 354-359; I, 2, 108-112. The chameleon was supposed to live on air. Hamlet's reply is meant to foster the belief that disappointment about the kingship is the cause of his insanity (II, 2, 258; III, 1, 125). Cf. Fenton, *Tragicall Discourses*, 1567, fol. 232 r^o: 'I in the meane tyme accordynge to the Cameleon lyvynge with the breathe of the ayre doo feede but vppon the offer of vayne ymaginacions'

101, 102 *I have . . . this answer. These . . . mine*: I have nothing to do with this answer; your reply does not fit my question. Hamlet has twisted the sense of *fare*, as if the King

had asked about his diet The King calls his attention to this incoherence and, at the same time, implies a general denial of any thoughts or purposes that could make Hamlet's answer pertinent

103. No, nor mine now. 'A man's words, says the proverb, are his own no longer than he keep them unspoken' (Johnson).

104. i' th' university. All the great European universities produced plays on festal occasions Cf. Heywood, *Apology for Actors*, 1612: 'In the tyme of my residence in Cambridge, I haue seene Tragedyes, Comedyes, Historyes, Pastorals, and Shewes, publickly acted, in which the Graduates of good place and reputation haue bene specially parted [1 e., furnished with rôles]: this is held necessary for the emboldening of their *Iumor* schollers, to arme them with audacity, against they come to bee employed in any publicke exercise' (C3 v^o). Milton satirizes this custom in a famous passage

In the Colleges so many of the young Divines, and those in next aptitude to Divinity have bin seene so oft upon the Stage, writhing and unboring their Clergie limmes to all the antick and dishonest gestures of Trinculo's, Buffons, and Bawds, prostituting the shame of that ministry which either they had, or were nigh having, to the eyes of Courtiers and Court-Ladies, with their Groomes and *Madamoisellae*: There while they acted, and overacted, among other young scholars, I was a spectator They thought themselves gallant men, and I thought them fools, they made sport, and I laught, they mispronounc't, and I mislik't, and to make up the *attusisme*, they were out, and I hist (*Apology against A Modest Confutation*, Works, Pickering ed., III, 267, 268)

108. Capitol. The assassination of Cæsar took place in the *curia Pompei* (Pompey's Senate House). Shakespeare's play shifts the place to the Capitol. See *Julius Cæsar*, II, 1, 211 — Brutus kill'd me. Polonius would not have added this bit of superfluous information if he had not been treating Hamlet as a lunatic

110. a brute part, etc A stock pun Hamlet's use of so coarse and stale a witticism accords with his acting the madman. Such talk (like that in II, 2, 172 ff., III, 1, 92-157) is quite at variance with his character as a gentleman and a scholar. Of course

Polonius takes no offence.—**part.** Common for 'act,' 'deed.'—**calf.** Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v, 2, 247-255.

114. **stay . . . patience:** await your leisure.

121. **my head upon your lap.** This appears to have been common at private theatrical entertainments. Steevens quotes Fletcher, *The Queen of Corinth*, I, 2 (ed Dyce, V, 408): 'Ushers her to her coach, lies at her feet At solemn masques.'

132. **your only jig-maker:** the nonpareil of all writers of comic songs. See II, 2, 522, and note. Cf. Ford, *Love's Sacrifice*, II, 1 (ed. Gifford and Dyce, II, 30): 'Petrarch was a dunce, Dante a jig-maker . . . to mt.'

135. **'s two hours:** this two hours.

136. **twice two months.** Four months have passed since the King's death. This scene, then, is to be dated at least two months later than Hamlet's interview with the Ghost, which took place a month or two after the murder. See I, 2, 138 ff

137, 138. **I'll have a suit of sables:** I'll throw off my mourning and wear the richest furs that can be found. By *black* Hamlet refers to his 'customary suit of solemn black' (I, 2, 78). *Sable* often means 'black'; but Hamlet says *sables*. These are mentioned as splendid and dignified attire (not mourning) in iv, 7, 81.

140-145. **by'r Lady:** by our Lady (the Virgin Mary) — **suffer not thinking on:** submit to being forgotten.—**hobby-horse.** The Hobby-horse was a very ancient character in May games and morris dances. In Shakespeare's time, however, he was frequently omitted, partly because the Puritans regarded him as a remnant of heathen superstition. Hence the popular saying quoted by Hamlet, which occurs also in *Love's Labour's Lost*, III, 1, 30.

145. **dumb show.** It has caused remark that after Hamlet's fling at 'inexplicable dumb shows' (I. 14) he should have allowed such a pantomime in this play. There are three good reasons. First, the dumb show suits the old-fashioned and stilted character of *The Murder of Gonzago* (see note on II. 165 ff.). The second reason is even more important. The centre and focus of interest during the acting of *The Murder*

of *Gonzago* must be—for Shakespeare's audience—not the actors in that play, but the guilty Claudius. We should therefore be enabled to follow the plot without attending too much to the players—and in this we are assisted by the dumb show, which is by no means 'inexplicable' but gives a clear summary of the plot. Finally, the dumb show is meant to torture King Claudius, and thus to help in making him reveal his 'occulted guilt.' It is the first turn of the thumbscrew.

146. What means this? Ophelia may need enlightenment, but King Claudius cannot fail to perceive that the play will come close to the facts of his crime. Yet he must not betray himself by objecting or by leaving the hall: he must stand the torture, if he can, without wincing. And, indeed, he shows amazing self-control. He does not flinch until the very moment when Lucianus uses the poison, and even then his actions do not reveal his secret, except to Hamlet and Horatio, who already know it.

147, 148. *miching malhecho*: sneaking crime. To *mich* (in modern dialect, *meech*) is to 'sneak' or, 'skulk' (cf. *mischer* for 'truant schoolboy' in *1 Henry IV*, ii, 4, 451), and *malhecho* is Spanish for 'misdeed.' Ophelia, who thinks that Hamlet is raving, tries to soothe him by remarking quietly, 'No doubt this show indicates the plot of the play.'

152. *keep counsel*: keep a secret. Cf. iv, 2, 11.

158. *naught*: naughty. Ophelia reproves Hamlet gently for his loose talk.

162. *the posy of a ring*: the short rhyming motto on a ring. *Posy* is a contraction of *poesy*. A long list of posies, from a manuscript of about 1596, may be found in Arber's *English Garner*, I, 611-619. Examples are: 'There is no smart Can turn my heart'; 'As true in love As turtle dove'; 'In thee my choice I do rejoyce.' See also *Archæological Journal*, XVI (1859), 307 ff.; *Love's Garland, or Posies for Rings*, etc., 1624 (in Halliwell's *Literature of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 223 ff.).

165 ff. The same necessity to make the style of the 'play within the play' distinct from the style of the play itself exists

in the case of 'The Mousetrap' as in the case of the Pyrrhus declamation (see ii, 2, 472, note). Here the difference is marked by the use of rhyme and by the elaborately sententious manner.

165-170. Cf. Greene, *Alphonsus*, iv, 1, 1152-1156 (ed. Collins, I, 113):

Thrise ten times *Phæbus* with his golden beames
Hath compassed the circle of the skie,
Thrise ten times *Ceres* hath her workemen hir'd,
And fild her barnes with frutefull crops of Corne,
Since first in Priesthood I did lead my life,

and also iv, 2 (I, 116):

Thrise *Hesperus* with pompe and peerelesse pride
Hath heau'd his head forth of the Easterne seas,
Thrise *Cynthia*, with *Phæbus* borrowed beames,
Hath shewn her bewue through the darkish clowdes,
Since that I, wretched Duke, haue tasted ought,
Or drunke a drop of any kinde of drinke,

Selimus, Emperour of the Turkes, ll. 37 ff. (Malone Society ed., p. 1):

Twice fifteene times hath faire *Latonaes* sonne
Walked about the world with his great light
Since I began, would I had nere begunne,
To sway this scepter

—*Phæbus' cart*: the chariot of the sun.—*Neptune's salt wash*: the surging waves of the sea.—*Tellus' orb'd ground*: this globe; the earth. Cf. ii, 2, 507.—*borrowed*: i.e., from the sun. Cf. Marlowe, *Tambraine*, i, 1 (ed. Dyce, I, 14): 'Before the moon renew her borrow'd light'

175. *I distrust you*: I am anxious about you.

176. After this line the Second Quarto inserts 'For women feare too much, euen as they loue,' and begins the next verse with 'And.' The other Quartos agree.

177. *holds quantity*: maintain proportion; correspond in amount. When women love much, they feel great anxiety; when they feel slight anxiety, it is a sign that their love is small.

179. *proof*: experience.

184. *My operant powers*: the physical forces that work in

the functions of life; my vital forces. Cf Webster, *Appius and Virginia*, v, 2, 108, 109 (ed. Lucas, II, 222)

This sight has stilled all my operant powers,
It'd all my blood, benum'd my motion quite

184. **leave to do:** cease to act

187. **O, confound the rest!** O, may God destroy that which you were about to say! may it never come to pass! With the Queen's protestations in ll 187 ff., 226 ff., compare the heroics of Cornelia in Kyd's *Cornelia*, Act II, ll. 1 ff. (ed. Boas, pp. 111 ff.)—a translation of Garnier's *Cornélie*.

189. **In . . . accurst!** If I take a second husband, may he prove a curse to me!

190 **None . . . first!** Let no woman wed a second husband unless she has murdered her first husband! Hamlet watches his mother, for he suspects her of complicity in the murder. The Ghost, interrupted by the approach of dawn, has left this point doubtful (I, 5, 85-88), and Hamlet's suspicion is not relieved until III, 4, 27-30.

192, 193 **instances:** causes, motives.—**move:** prompt—**respects of thrift:** considerations of worldly welfare or profit. Cf. III, 1, 68.

194 **I kill my husband dead:** I kill my dead husband a second time, as it were, by this act of unfaithfulness.

198-201 **Purpose . . . memory:** We cannot hold fast to our purposes when we have forgotten what prompted them; if memory fails, no purpose can last long.—**validity:** strength, vigour—**like fruit . . . be:** A purpose holds until the moment for action comes, as fruit hangs on the tree so long as it is unripe, but one's purposes fail of their own accord when the moment for action arrives.

203. **To pay ourselves:** A purpose is an obligation laid upon us by ourselves; and we readily excuse ourselves for neglecting it, for a man is an indulgent creditor to himself.

206, 207. **The violence . . . destroy:** When either grief or joy is violent, it exhausts itself by its own force, and thus the resolutions formed under its impulse come to naught.—**Their own**

enactures: their purposed acts.—**destroy.** Attracted into the plural by the plurals that precede Cf. 1, 2, 38.

208, 209. **Where:** in persons in whom, etc.; i.e., in persons of an emotional temperament.—**on slender accident:** as a result of any trifling occurrence. *On* was common in this causal sense, which survives in *on compulsion, on purpose*.

216. **hitherto:** so far; up to this point in human history In other words, 'Such has always been the experience of mankind'

218, 219. **who in want . . . enemy.** An insincere friend is an unripe foe. He needs only to be put to the test at a crisis to be ripened into an avowed enemy.

221, 222. **contráry.** Note the accent.—**devices:** plans, purposes —**still:** constantly

228-229 Omitted in the Folio.—**An anchor's cheer:** an anchorite's (hermit's) fare. Steevens would read 'chair,' in support of which he quotes Hall, *Satires*, iv, 2 (ed. Singer, p. 86). 'Sit seven yeres pining in an Anchore's chair' Wilson reads *cheere* (with the Second Quarto) and interprets it as 'chair.' But cf. 'wedding cheer' (*Romeo and Juliet*, iv, 5, 87); 'royal cheer' (*Timon*, iii, 6, 56).—**my scope:** the limit of my enjoyment of life.

230 **blanks the face of joy:** either 'blanches joy's face,' 'turns it pale' (the proper hue of joy being rosy-red; cf. *Comedy of Errors*, iv, 2, 4. 'Look'd he or red or pale, or sad or merrily?'), or, perhaps better, 'turns it to a blank,' 'deprives it of all expression'—almost equivalent to 'blasts.'

232 **here and hence:** in this world and the next.

236. **My spirits grow dull:** My vitality is at a low ebb The King has a feeling of physical depression; he does not mean that he is despondent in mind.

240. **doth protest.** Queen Gertrude calmly criticizes the exaggerated style of the speech. She shows no such disturbance of mind as might indicate a guilty conscience.

242. **the argument:** an outline of the plot When a play was presented at court, it was customary to submit such an outline beforehand in order to avoid incidents that might be offensive. The King's question shows how well he is controlling himself.

He knows what torture the play has in store for him (for he has seen the dumb show), but he does not betray himself, even by a tone or a look. To the courtiers his question seems to concern merely some resemblance between the play and the Queen's second marriage. Hamlet's reply is meant to give another turn to the screw, but even then Claudius shows no distress. He merely asks (l. 246), with an air of polite interest, what the *title* of the play is.

242-245. **no offence**: nothing offensive. Hamlet picks up the King's words and twists the sense: 'There's no crime in the play—nothing but a little playful poisoning.'—**in jest**: not in fact, but merely in the play. His words sound insane to the courtiers.

247. **'The Mousetrap'**: the thing in which he'll 'catch the conscience of the King.'—**Tropically**: by a trope; metaphorically.

248. **the image**: the exact representation. Sarrazin (*Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, XXXI [1895], 169) supposes the source to be an historical event, the murder of the Marchese Alfonso Gonzaga of Castelfelfredo in 1592, at his country house, by eight ruffians in the pay of his nephew.

252, 253. **free**: free from guilt, innocent.—**gall'd jade**. To *gall* is to 'rub off the skin so as to make a sore spot'; *jade* is a common disrespectful term for 'horse.'—**winch**: wince. Clark and Wright compare Lyly, *Euphues* (ed. Bond, I, 257): 'Well I knowe none will winch excepte shée bee gawled, neither any bee offended vnlesse shée be guiltie.' Tilley (No. 525) adds, from the same (II, 151): 'Rubbe there no more, least I winch, for deny I wil not that I am wroung on the withers.' The proverb is common. Cf. *The Pryde and Abuse of Women*, ca. 1550 (ed. Hazlitt, *Early Popular Poetry*, IV, 243):

Rubbe a galde horse on the backe,
And he wyll kicke and wynse;

Rowlands, *Martin Mark-all*, 1610 (Hunterian Club ed., p. 15):
'It is not good medling with galled lades, least they winch and

kické.'—**withers**: the ridge between a horse's shoulders.—**unwrung**: not chafed, and therefore not sensitive Our consciences are clear.

255. **a chorus**: a character in a play whose business is to make explanations to the audience. Father Time in *The Winter's Tale* (iv, 1) is a good example. In *Henry V* the Chorus speaks a Prologue to each act and a final Epilogue. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, i, 11 Gower is the Chorus in *Pericles*

256, 257. **I could . . . dallying**: If I could look on at a scene of dalliance between your lover and you, I could tell what it meant. By the *puppets* Hamlet means Ophelia and her imagined lover. Puppet shows, which were very common, regularly had an interpreter, who sometimes sat on the stage.

261. **better, and worse**: keener as to wit, but worse as to meaning. Ophelia does not resent Hamlet's indecency, since she thinks him mad.

262. **So**: i.e., for better, for worse.—**you**: you women — **must take**. So the First Quarto. The other Quartos and the Folios read *mistake*—a word formerly common in the sense of 'take wrongly (or wrongfully),' 'take (something) to which one has no right.' Attempts to justify this reading amount to something like the following interpretation: 'According to the marriage service you take your husbands "for better, for worse"; that is, promising to be faithful wives in all the changes of fortune; but, in fact, your "taking" is "mis-taking" (fraudulent taking), since you do not keep your marriage vows.' But this is to torture language unmercifully.

263. **Pox**: Plague on it!

264, 265. **the . . . revenge**. Simpson notes Hamlet's quotation from an old play, *The True Tragedy of Richard III*, 1594 (Malone Society ed., ll. 1892, 1893).

The screeking Rauen sits croking for reuenge
Whole heards of beasts comes bellowing for reuenge

267. **Confederate . . . seeing**: the time being in league with me (since this is a favourable moment), and nobody except my confederate, the time, seeing what I am about.

268. **midnight weeds.** Poisonous and magic herbs were thought to derive additional power from being collected at some special time, as, for example, at midnight.

269. **With Hecate's ban:** by the curse (the evil spell) of Hecate, the goddess of witchcraft and black magic. See *Macbeth*, iii, 5 (a scene not written by Shakespeare).

272-275. **He poisons him,** etc. Hamlet says this without any show of excitement, as if he were merely explaining the play to spectators who were not at all touched in conscience by its incidents.

276. **rises.** The King has endured the dumb show without flinching, and also the whole course of the play until this moment. Even now, when the details of his secret crime are enacted before his eyes, he does not betray himself except to Hamlet and Horatio, who have learned the facts already. To the others (including the Queen) Claudius seems merely to be suddenly indisposed. Cf. ll. 310-315.

277. **false fire:** the harmless discharge of a gun loaded with powder only. Cf. Gosson, *Apology for The School of Abuse* (ed. Arber, p. 75). 'When I spare not to greete them with poulder and shot, answeares mee againe with a false fire'; Defoe, *Captain Singleton*, 1720, p. 149: 'We saw Lions and Tigers, and Leopards every Night and Morning in Abundance; . . . if they offer'd to come near us, we made false Fire with any Gun that was uncharged, and they would walk off as soon as they saw the Flash'

280. **some light!** The King calls for the torchbearers to conduct him to his chamber. See the stage direction before l. 95.

282, 283 **strucken . . . ungalled.** Hamlet repeats the idea already expressed in ll. 252, 253.

286-289. **this:** this declamation, the way in which I have spoken these verses. Hamlet has relieved his excitement by a bit of theatrical spouting. We may compare his apparent flippancy in i, 5, 116-163. The feathers and razed shoes are allusions to actors' costumes — **turn Turk:** apostatize (like a Christian who becomes a Mohammedan), **play me false.** — **Provincial roses:** huge rosettes. Clark and Wright note that

Rosa Provincialis was a name for the damask rose. Provins, a French town, was famous for its roses.—*raz'd*: slashed; ornamented by cross-cuts in a pattern. Hunter quotes Henry Peacham, *The Truth of Our Time*, 1638, pp. 61, 62: 'Shooyes that goe under the name of Roses, from thirty shillings to three, foure, and five pounds the paire. Yea, a Gallant of the time not long since, payd thirty pound for a paire.'—a *cry*: a pack—used ordinarily of hounds, but here jocosely of actors.

290. *Half a share*. Horatio speaks with his customary mild humour (see 1, 1, 19). In Shakespeare's time each regular member of a company of players had his proportion of the receipts instead of a salary. Some had a full share, some half a share. Cf. Dekker, *The Wonderfull Yeare*, 1603 (ed. Grosart, I, 100): 'The worst players Boy stood vpon his good parts, swearing . . . he would . . . be half a sharer (at least).'

295 *pajock*: peacock. The peacock had an evil reputation for cruelty and lust in the natural history of Shakespeare's day, and perhaps the poet had this in mind.

296. *rhym'd*: i.e., by saying *ass* instead of *pajock*.

302. *recorders*: a sort of flageolet.

303, 304 *For . . . perdy*. This sounds like an echo of Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, a very popular play (iv, 1, 196, 197; ed. Boas, p. 87):

And if the world like not this Tragedie,
• Hard is the hap of olde Hieronimo

—*belike*: probably.—*perdy*. An old-fashioned oath (*par dieu*), used colloquially for 'assuredly.' *Perdy* and *comedy* made a good rhyme in Elizabethan pronunciation.

312. *distemper'd*: out of sorts physically.

314. *drink*. Cf. 1, 2, 124-128, 175; 1, 4, 8-22. Claudius was no habitual drunkard, though he sometimes drank deep, according to the Danish custom. Hamlet, who hates both the King and the custom, calls him 'the bloat King' (iii, 4, 182).

315-319. *choler*: bile. In the speech that follows Hamlet puns on the word. The King pretends to be suffering from a sudden attack of indigestion, causing dizziness—from what we still call a 'bilious attack.'—*should*: would surely—for

. . . **purgation**. One continuous pun. *Purgation* means (1) 'purging by means of medicine' and (2) 'purification of the soul by confession and penance.' Cf. *As You Like It*, v, 4, 44. *Choler* means both 'bile' and 'anger.'

320. **frame**: structure, coherent form. Hamlet's speech sounds to Guildenstern like madness.

327, 328. **wholesome**: sane, rational.—your pardon. Cf. i, 2, 56, note.

334-337 **But, sir**, etc. Hamlet pretends to make a strong effort to fix his wandering wits upon the subject—to the **matter**! Let us return to the subject!

338, 339. **your behaviour**. This does not refer particularly to anything that Hamlet had said or done during the play-scene, but to his general wildness of speech and manner. The summons from the Queen merely carries out the suggestion made by Polonius before the play began (iii, 1, 189-193).—**amazement and admiration**: confusion of mind and wonder. Cf. ii, 2, 591; iii, 4, 112.

343. **closet**: private room; boudoir. Cf. ii, 1, 77.

346. **trade**: business. The word was common in this sense, and conveys no suggestion that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are mercenary agents. Cf. 2 *Henry IV*, i, 1, 173, 174:

His forward spirit
Would lift him where most trade of danger rag'd

—us. Hamlet's intentional use of the royal *we* reminds Rosencrantz of the idea that his madness sprang from thwarted ambition, and he accordingly makes one more attempt to induce him to reveal the cause of his insanity (cf. ii, 2, 258).

349. **by these pickers and stealers**: by these ten fingers; by this hand (with a gesture). The phrase, as Whalley notes, comes from the catechism of the Church of England, where the catechumen is told to keep his hands from 'picking [i.e., pilfering] and stealing.'

350-354. **distemper**: disorder of mind.—**liberty**. Rosencrantz hints that Hamlet may be put under restraint (as a lunatic) if he stubbornly refuses to tell what ails him. Cf. iii, 1, 194; iv, 1, 14. 'His liberty is full of threats to all.'—I lack

advancement. Hamlet recurs to the cause already discussed with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (ii, 2, 249 ff.). Cf. i, 5, 185; iii, 1, 125

355. **the voice of the King.** Claudius has proclaimed Hamlet his successor in i, 2, 109

358, 359. **while the grass grows—:** While the grass is growing, the horse starves. Hamlet implies that to wait for 'advancement' that is so far off is very unsatisfying. The proverb was common, and English examples have been cited from the sixteenth century, but it is far mustier than that, for Petrus de Vineis quotes it in a letter written before 1249: 'Dum herba crescit, equus moritur' (*Epistles*, ii, 53).—**something:** somewhat. Cf. l. 79.—**musty:** and therefore too trite to be quoted in full.

360-362. **To withdraw:** to step aside so as to be out of the hearing of the players. Hamlet withdraws to one side of the stage with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, as if he had something of moment to confide to them.—**go about:** undertake, try.—**to recover . . . of me:** to get to the windward of me.—**into a toil.** Cf. Fletcher, *The Woman's Prize*, iv, 4:

How daintily and cunningly you drive me
Up like a deer to the toil!

363-365. **if my duty . . . unmannerly:** If, in my devotion to your interests, I am too bold in questioning you, it is my love that causes this breach of good manners. Hamlet, assuming an air of vacancy, pretends to find this apology unintelligible.

371. **touch.** Cf. *Richard II*, i, 3, 163-165:

Or like a cunning instrument cas'd up
Or, being open, put into his hands
That know no touch to tune the harmony.

372. **as easy as lying.** A proverbial phrase, conveying no personal suggestion, though Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are at liberty to put the coat on if it fits them. The word *lying* should not be emphasized.—**ventages:** wind-holes—the 'stops' mentioned in l. 376.

386. **organ**: musical instrument —'Sblood. This oath is rapped out with startling unexpectedness and almost makes Guildenstern jump. See note on II, 2, 383.

388. **fret**. Frets are small bars of wire or wood on a guitar or the like, to guide the fingering. Hamlet puns on the sense of 'worry,' 'agitate.' Cf. Dekker, *The Gull's Hornbook* (ed. Grosart, II, 254): 'Theres no musick without frets'; Dekker, *The Honest Whore*, I, 2 (Pearson ed., II, 10): 'Musitian will he never be (yet I find much musicke in him), but he loues no frets.'

391. **presently**: without delay [*rust*]

393-399. Polonius is merely humouring the supposed madman. There is nothing absurd in his conduct. As to the shifting shapes of clouds cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV, 14, 2-11:

Sometime we see a cloud that's dragonish,
A vapour sometime like a bear or lion,
A tower'd citadel, a pendent rock,
A forked mountain, or blue promontory
With trees upon't that nod unto the world
And mock our eyes with air. Thou hast seen these signs;
They are black Vesper's pageants
That which is now a horse, even with a thought
The rack dislimns, and makes it indistinct
As water is in water.

400, 401. **Then**. The false appearance of logic given by the use of *then* is a part of Hamlet's counterfeit madness.—**by-and-by**: immediately.—**They . . . bent**. Spoken aside, in self-congratulation on his success in playing the madman: 'They indulge my folly—humour me in my supposed madness—as completely as I can wish.'—**bent**. An idiom from archery.

406-417. Hamlet's imaginative nature pictures him to himself as capable of any atrocity in the way of revenge. We are not, however, to suppose that there was any danger of his killing his mother. Indeed, the Ghost has expressly warned him not to harm her (I, 5, 85-88). One purpose of this speech is to enlighten the audience, so that, when Hamlet threatens the Queen in scene IV (ll. 18-21), they may know that he does not mean to do her any harm.

408. **Contagion.** Two ideas combine in this poetic figure. In the night, evil spirits and malign influences were supposed to have more power than by day, and at the same time the night air was regarded as charged with actual contagion. Cf *Julius Caesar*, II, 1, 265: 'the vile contagion of the night'; 2 *Henry VI*, IV, 1, 3-7.

And now loud-howling wolves arouse the jades
That drag the tragic melancholy night,
Who with their drowsy, slow, and flagging wings
Cleep [i.e., surround] dead men's graves, and from their misty jaws
Breathe foul contagious darkness in the air

410. **Soft!** Cf. I, 1, 126.

412. **Nero:** who murdered his mother.

415. **be.** Subjunctive. 'Let my tongue and soul be hypocrites' His soul is to pretend a savage purpose which it does not feel, and his words are to express it

416 **How . . . somever:** howsoever much.—**shent:** berated; violently reprov'd.

417. **To give them seals:** to confirm or fulfil them by action.

Scene III.

1. **I like him not:** I do not like the way he is acting.—with us. The royal *we*—'with me the King.'

3. **your commission.** Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are to 'bear the mandate' (III, 4, 202-204)—a sealed letter addressed to the King of England ordering him to put Hamlet to death (IV, 3, 60-70, V, 2, 19-25). This is what is called 'their grand commission' (V, 2, 18). Whether King Claudius tells them its contents we are nowhere informed. Probably not; for he is secretive by disposition, and now, if ever, secrecy is the best policy. The audience does not learn what the mandate prescribes until IV, 3, 60-67. Ostensibly Hamlet is sent as ambassador (III, 1, 177, 178; IV, 6, 9, 10). His own suspicions are vague (III, 4, 202 ff.; IV, 3, 50).—**dispatch:** cause to be drawn up.

5. **The terms of our estate:** the condition of my royal rank. A stately phrase for 'my kingly office.'

11. **peculiar:** individual, private.

13. **noyance:** harm, injury.

14. **depends and rests.** A singular verb with a plural subject is especially common when the verb precedes or when the subject has a collective sense.

15. **cesse:** cessation, decease. The Folio reads 'cease.'

16. **a gulf:** a whirlpool.

17 ff. **a massy wheel,** etc. This stilted and inconsistent figure is a fine instance of courtly rhetoric. Rosencrantz fixes his wheel 'on the highest mount' because a king occupies an exalted position; but he has no definite idea of the mechanics of the structure and (in l. 19) takes refuge in the vaguest of all words—'things.' Then he abandons his specific metaphor of the wheel and emphasizes the *fall* ('ruin') of the structure.

22. **ruin:** downfall.

24. **Arm you:** prepare yourselves; make ready.

25. **fear.** *Fear* includes both the ordinary meaning and the sense 'object of fear' (i.e., Hamlet).

27. **closet.** Cf. iii, 2, 343.

28. **convey myself:** slip quietly, without being seen.

29. **the process:** what is said; their conversation.—**tax him home:** take him to task soundly, *Home* comes from the sense of 'a home thrust.' Cf. iii, 4, 1.

30. **as you said.** The suggestion had come from Polonius, but the King had accepted it (iii, 1, 189-195).

33. **of vantage:** from a favourable position.

37. **the primal eldest curse.** See *Genesis*, iv, 10-12.

39. **Though inclination . . . will:** though I not only *wish* to pray, but feel a strong *impulse* toward prayer.

41. **bound:** in duty bound.

43. **neglect:** omit; leave undone.

46, 47. **snow.** Cf. *Isaiah*, i, 18.—**Whereto . . . offence?** For what purpose does God's mercy *exist*, if not to confront a man's guilt when that appears as accuser before the Great Judge, and thus to procure his pardon?

48-50. **this twofold force**, etc.: 'Lead us not into temptation,' and 'Forgive us our trespasses'

54. **effects**: things obtained, gains.

55 **mine own ambition**: the satisfaction of my lust for power — **my queen**. Note that 'my queen' is the acme of the climax (cf. 1, 5, 75). The murder was a 'crime of passion.'

56. **th' offence**: that which has been gained by the crime, the booty.

57. **the corrupted currents**: the evil courses; the 'ways of the world.'

58. **Offence's gilded hand**: the guilty hand, if lined with gold

59, 60. **the wicked prize . . . law**: a part of the booty may be used to bribe the judge.—**is not so above**. Cf. Ford, *Love's Sacrifice*, III, 2 (ed Gifford and Dyce, III, 62): 'Heaven is an unbrib'd justice'

61-64. **There**. Emphatic.—**there the action . . . nature**: *There* (in God's court) the suit must be brought in its true nature—in exact accord with the facts. An action at law is said to *lie* when it may legally be brought.—**we . . . evidence**: We must meet our sins face to face, for they are present in court to accuse us; and thus we are forced to testify against ourselves. Supply *are* before *compelled*.—**What rests?** What remains? What is there left for me to do?

65, 66. **can**: can accomplish.—**what can it**: i.e., even *it*.

68, 69. **limed soul**. The figure is that of a bird caught by alighting upon a twig smeared with the sticky substance called birdlime. The harder it struggles, the more it is besmeared and ensnared ('engag'd'). Thus the King's soul, in its efforts to find some escape from guilt, merely succeeds in convincing itself that no escape is possible,—since he can neither pray nor repent. Cf. Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, xxii, 105: 'Like the heedless bird that finds itself caught in a net or in birdlime the more it beats its wings and strives to get loose, the more it entangles itself.'

69. **Make assay**. Addressed by the King to himself: 'Though prayer seems impossible, yet make the attempt.'

73. **pat:** readily, conveniently — **praying:** and therefore off his guard.

74. **now.** Here Hamlet draws his sword, which he sheathes again at l. 88.

75. **That would be scann'd:** That point needs scrutiny.

79. **this is hire and salary:** This would be to act as if I had hired him to murder my father and were now paying him his wages. The text follows the Folios. The Quartos read 'this is base and silly.'

80. **grossly:** in a gross condition; not purified by repentance, confession, and absolution. Cf. 1, 3, 76-79. — **full of bread:** in the full flush of worldly pleasures (as opposed to prayer and fasting). Malone aptly quotes *Ezekiel*, xvi, 49. 'Pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness.'

81. **crimes:** faults, sins—not in the special sense of 'criminal offences.' Cf. 1, 5, 12; 11, 1, 43 — **broad blown:** in full bloom. Cf. 1, 5, 76: 'Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin.' — **flush:** full of life and vigour

82. **audit:** final account (in the book of judgment).

83. **in our . . . thought:** judging as well as our circumstances allow, and letting our thoughts take their natural course, we must conclude, etc. 'Our course of thought' is contrasted with God's complete knowledge; and what makes the difference is 'our circumstance,' i.e., the fact that we are mere men.

85. **in the purging of his soul.** Contrasted with *grossly* in l. 80.

86. **season'd:** ripened, matured; i.e., thoroughly prepared. — **his passage:** from this world to the next

88-93. **Up, sword, . . . hent:** Back, sword, into thy sheath, and be thou seized by me at a more horrid moment—when his death will involve his damnation — **relish:** taste, trace — **that his heels,** etc.: so that he may fall headlong to hell

88-95. See Introduction

96. **This physic:** the considerations which lead me to postpone revenge. Wilson interprets *physic* as 'prayer,' comparing
1 85

Scene IV.

1, 2. **straight:** straightway, immediately.—**lay home to him:** tax him home (iii, 3, 29); assail him with home truths.—**broad:** free, lawless. Cf. 'broad words' (*Macbeth*, iii, 6, 21)

4. **heat:** anger (on the King's part).—**silence me:** stop talking and hide myself. The Second Quarto and the Folios read 'silence'; the First Quarto has 'shrowde my selfe.' Hammer reads 'sconce, i e., 'ensconce'—a not improbable emendation. Cf. *Merry Wives*, iii, 3, 96: 'I will ensconce me behind the arras.'

5. **round:** outspoken. Cf. ii, 2, 139; iii, 1, 191.

7. **fear me not:** Do not be afraid that I shall spare him. Cf. i, 3, 51.

9-14. Note the line-for-line arrangement of the speeches (*stichomythia*).—**idle:** foolish. Cf. iii, 2, 95.

14. **Have you forgot me?** Have you forgotten who I am?

17. **those.** A threat is implied. The Queen turns to leave the room, as if to summon Claudius; but Hamlet detains her.

19. **a glass:** a mirror.

21. **What wilt thou do?** The Queen's alarm is caused by some menace in Hamlet's action. He has forced her to sit down and stands over her in a threatening attitude. See note on iii, 2, 406-417. In the First Quarto the Queen, in reporting the interview, says:

Whenas he came, I first bespake him faire,
But then he throwes and tosses me about,
As one forgetting that I was his mother:
At last I call'd for help

23. **a rat?** Cf. *The-Hystorie of Hamblet*, 1608, Chap. iii: 'He cried, A rat, a rat' and presently drawing his sworde thrust it into the hangings.' The exclamation is not found in Belleforest's *Histoire*, of which *The Hystorie* is a translation. See Introduction.—**for a ducat:** I'll bet a ducat.

25. **Is it the King?** So Hamlet supposed when he made the thrust. In the interval between scenes iii and iv, then, there

has been time enough for the King to reach the Queen's apartment and conceal himself.

28. **As kill . . . brother.** A plain accusation that the Queen was an accomplice in the murder of her husband. Her astonishment convinces Hamlet of her innocence; and he makes no further allusion to such complicity, even when she asks 'What have I done?' in l. 39. There are resemblances between this scene and that in which Edward III accuses his mother of murdering her husband in Marlowe's *Edward II* (ed. Dyce, II, 288-289). In Belleforest and the prose *Hystorie* the Queen declares her innocence in emphatic terms, adds that her second marriage was the effect of fear, and joins Hamlet in his plans for revenge. Cf. the First Quarto:

Queene. But as I haue a soule, I sweare by heauen,
I neuer knew of this most horride murder. . . .

Ham And mother, but assist mee in reuenge,
And in his death your infamy shall die

Queene Hamlet, I vow by that maiesty,
That knowes our thoughts, and lookes into our hearts,
I will conceale, consent, and doe my best,
What stratagem soe're thou shalt deuise.

33 **too busy:** too much of a busybody; too meddlesome.

37, 38. **custom.** Cf. ll. 161 ff.—**braz'd it:** plated it with brass; made it impenetrable to shame.—**proof:** armour. Cf. *Richard III*, v, 3, 220: 'armed in proof.'—**sense:** feeling.

40. **Such an act.** Hamlet upbraids his mother for her adultery. He no longer accuses her of murder.

41-44. **grace:** beauty.—**the rose.** Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, viii, 619: 'rosy red, love's proper hue.'—**a blister:** a brand of infamy. Cf. iv, 5, 118-120.

46. **contraction:** the obligation of the marriage contract.

47. **religion:** the marriage vow. Cf. *King John*, III, 1, 229: 'with all religious strength of sacred vows.'

48. **A rhapsody of words:** mere senseless verbiage—**glow.** Cf. *King John*, iv, 1, 113, 114: 'blush and glow with shame'

49. **this solidity.** Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, I, 3, 113: 'all this solid globe.'—**compound mass.** Our globe is conceived as an harmonious compound of the four elements.

50. **tristful**: sad, gloomy The Folio reads 'tristfull', the Second Quarto has 'heated.'—**against the doom**: at the approach of the Day of Judgment

51. **thought-sick**: sick at heart *Thought* is often used in the sense of 'melancholy,' 'despondent thought' Cf. iii, 1, 85, iv, 5, 188, *Twelfth Night*, ii, 4, 115.

52. **the index**. Cf. *Othello*, ii, 1, 263, 264. 'an index and obscure prologue.' The *index* of a book meant the 'table of contents,' which precedes the text of a volume.

53. **this picture**. *Station* ('attitude in standing') in l. 58 is enough to prove that this portrait was full-length, and if so, the portrait of Claudius was doubtless of the same sort. Miniatures have often been substituted on the stage. Cf. *Two Noble Kinsmen*, iv, 2 In the old German *Hamlet* (*Der Bestrafte Brudemord*), iii, 5, Hamlet speaks of the portraits as 'dort in jener Gallerie.'¹

54. **counterfeit presentment**: representation in portraiture. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, iii, 2, 115 'Fair Portia's counterfeit!'

56 **Hyperion**. See i, 2, 140—**front**: forehead.—**Jove**. Cf. iii, 2, 294

58 **station**: posture in standing No paraphrase does justice to the alert activity expressed by the original word.

62 **a man**. Cf. i, 2, 187, 188.

65. **his**: its.

¹For portraits (real or imaginary) hanging on a wall see Webster, *The Devil's Law-Case*, iii, 3, 379 ff. (ed Lucas, II, 284), Middleton, *Blurt*, *Master Constable*, ii, 1, 174 ff, ii, 2, 85 ff., 110 ff., 159-162; iii, 1, 1 (ed. Bullen, I, 33, 37, 38, 40, 50), Heywood, *If You Know Not Me*, Part II (Pearson ed., I, 275 ff.). Small portraits (miniatures or the like) are common in stage business. See Marlowe, *Edward II*, i, 4, 127 (ed Dyce, II, 185; ed. Charlton and Waller, p 92); *A Merry Knack to Know a Knaue*, 1594 (Hazlitt's Dodsley, VI, 565f); Fletcher, *The Custom of the Country*, v, 3, 17, 18, Fletcher, *The Humorous Lieutenant*, v, 5, 28 ff., Dekker, *Satromastix* (Pearson ed, I, 157), Ford, *The Lover's Melancholy*, ii, 1; iv, 3; v, 1 (ed. Gifford and Dyce, I, 37, 86, 98), Brome, *The Novella*, iv (Pearson ed, I, 147), Brome, *The Queen's Exchange* (Pearson ed, III, 474, 475), *The Puritane Widow*, i, 1, 135-138 (ed Brooke, *Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p 222). On the whole question see W J. Lawrence, *Pre-Restoration Stage Studies*, 1927, pp 111-116.

66, 67. **leave**: cease.—**batten**: gorge yourself.

68 **at your age**. To Hamlet, a very young man, his mother seems too old to feel passionate love. We should not be misled into exaggerating the Queen's age. She is in what we should call the prime of life.

69, 70. **The heyday in the blood**: the liveliness of youthful passion; 'the compulsive ardour' (l. 86).—**tame**: under control —**waits upon**: defers to.

71-81. **Sense sure you have**, etc.. You have life and the faculty of motion. Hence I infer that you have also the faculty of perception by the senses. But surely all your five senses must be paralyzed. Mere insanity could not cause you to make such a mistake in choosing; for madness never so thoroughly suspended the action of the five senses as not to leave some fragment of one of them—enough to enable you to choose where the difference was so enormous ('to serve in such a difference'). That *sense* means 'sensuous perception' in ll. 71, 74 (as in l. 80), not 'intellect,' is clear from Hamlet's appeal to sight, feeling, hearing, and smell. Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 433-444. *Motion* means 'normal bodily motion,' as contrasted with paralysis: she 'lives and moves and has her being.'

74. **ecstasy**: madness. Cf. l. 138; iii, 1, 168.

75. **quantity**. Emphatic. 'small quantity,' 'modicum.' Cf. iii, 2, 45; v, 1, 293.—**choice**: the power to choose; discrimination.

76. **To serve**: enough to serve.

77. **cozen'd**: cheated, tricked.—**hoodman-blind**: blindman's buff. The Queen, Hamlet implies, had made her choice with as little discrimination as that shown by the *hoodman* (or blinded person) in blindman's buff, who seizes upon anybody within reach and cannot tell one from another.

78-81. Omitted in the Folios.—**sans**: without.—**so mope**: be so dull and torpid.

82, 83. **Rebellious hell**. The baser elements in our nature are conceived as rising in mutiny against our nobler selves. The figure is similar to that in the warning of Laertes to Ophelia: 'Youth to itself rebels' (i, 3, 44).—**matron's**. Emphatic: 'even in a matron's frame.'

86. **gives the charge:** makes the attack.

88. **reason panders will:** reason, which should control desire, becomes basely subservient to it.

90, 91. **grained:** dyed in grain, i.e., in fast colours. *Grain* was a kind of scarlet dye-stuff (cochineal).—**leave their tinct:** give up their colour.

92. **enseamed:** soaked in grease.

95. **daggers.** Cf. III, 2, 414.

96. **A murderer.** To the Queen this word sounds like a mere abusive epithet. To the end she remains in ignorance of the murder.

97. **the tithe:** the tenth part.

98. **a vice of kings:** a rascally buffoon among kings. The *vice* in the old morality plays was a comic character.

99. **cutpurse.** Properly, 'one who steals money by cutting a hole in the purse' (worn at the girdle); then, 'a pickpocket' in general; here, 'a sneaking thief.' Claudius is not a usurper. He has been legally elected King in Hamlet's absence; and thus, as Hamlet says to Horatio in calmer and more literal language, he has 'popp'd in between th' election and [Hamlet's] hopes' (v, 2, 65).

101. **Enter the Ghost.** There is no room for discussion whether this is a 'subjective' or an 'objective' ghost—whether it is a figment of Hamlet's brain or an actual apparition. Ghosts had the power, it was believed, of appearing and speaking to one person while remaining invisible and inaudible to all others present. The fact that a speech is given to the Ghost settles the question. If he were a delusion, Hamlet would merely imagine that he heard his words, and, if the audience needed to know what Hamlet imagined he heard, he would himself repeat them. There is a similar situation in Chapman's tragedy *The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois*, v, 1 (Pearson ed., II, 166). Guise and Clermont are conversing when the ghost of Bussy appears, calls for vengeance, and vanishes. Clermont, Bussy's brother, sees and hears the ghost, but Guise perceives nothing.

Guise. Why stand'st thou still thus, and applyest thine eares
And eyes to nothing?

Clermont.

Saw you nothing here?

Guise. Thou dream'st, awake now, what was here to see?

Clermont. My Brother's spirit, vrging his reuenge

Guise. Thy Brother's spirit! Pray thee, mocke me not

Clermont convinces Guise that the apparition is not imaginary; but Hamlet does not convince his mother. Since she thinks him insane, his seeing the Ghost is, to her, a symptom of his insanity.—in his nightgown. These words are in the First Quarto only. The Ghost appears, not (as in Act I) in armour, but 'in his habit as he lived', in his dressing gown, attire suitable for the privacy of his own apartment.

102. A king of shreds and patches! Often taken as alluding to the motley attire of a fool or jester; but apparently Hamlet means merely that Claudius's royalty is a threadbare, out-at-elbows, patched-up thing. He has compared him to a clown, then to a pickpocket and sneak-thief, now he compares him to a ragged vagabond. Cf. the First Quarto: 'a king of clowts, of very shreds'

103, 104 Save me . . . guards! Cf. i, 4, 39.

107, 108 laps'd in time and passion: 'having suffered time to slip and passion to cool' (Johnson). Literally, *laps'd* means 'having slipped or failed'—important: momentous.

110. Do not forget. Cf. i, 5, 91 — This visitation. Since the Ghost has a private message of vengeance, intended only for Hamlet's ear, he shows himself to Hamlet alone. His message is interrupted (at l. 112) by his sympathy for the Queen's distress. Cf. i, 5, 84-88.

112. amazement: utter confusion of mind. Cf. ii, 2, 591; iii, 2, 339.

114. Conceit: imagination (which forms, in the Queen's mind, a vivid image of her guilt).

118. incorporal: bodiless.

119. spirits. In moments of excitement the *spirits* or 'vital forces' were thought to come, as it were, to the surface, and to cause various symptoms of agitation, such as a wild glare in the eyes.

120. th' alarm: the call to arms (*all' arme*).

121. **bedded hairs**: 'thy knotted and combined locks' (1, 5, 18) — **excrements**: in the literal sense of 'outgrowths.' The hair and nails, being not exactly a part of the body but rather something growing out of it, were often so called.

122. **an end**. Cf. 1, 5, 19.

123, 124 **distemper**: distraction. — **patience**: calmness, self-control.

127. **capable**: capable of feeling and emotion.

128, 129. **convert**: change utterly — **effects**: deeds.

135. **as he liv'd**: as he was dressed when alive; not, as if he lived.

138, 139. **ecstasy**: madness. — **cunning**: skilful.

144. **gambol from**: not merely 'wander from,' but 'wander away from in a fantastic way.' — **for love of grace**: for God's sake.

145. **flattering unction**: soothing ointment. Hamlet urges his mother to take his reproofs and exhortations seriously and not as the ravings of a maniac.

147-149. **skin . . . unseen**. For the metaphor cf. Thomas Hughes, *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, ed. 1587, iii, 1 (sig. C4-D)

I neuer yet sawe hurt so smoothly heald,
But that the skarre bewraide the former wound:
Yea, where the salue dyd soonest close the skinne,
The sore was oftner couered vp than cur'de
Which festering deepe and filde within, at last
With sodaine breach grew greater than at first.

152-155 **Forgive me . . . good**: I must ask you to forgive my action in thus upbraiding you, though it is a good action (a virtue) on my part; for, in these corrupt times, the virtuous cannot chide the vicious without asking pardon for the liberty — indeed, they must bend the knee (*curb*) and beg for leave to benefit them by such needed reproof. Hamlet feels some compunction at his own harsh language, but he justifies it in the very act of apologizing. — **fatness . . . times**. Hamlet compares the corrupt times to a body that is unhealthily corpulent (*pursy*). Cf. Heywood, *Apology for Actors*, 1612, sig. B r^o:

'In the fatnes and ranknes of a peacable Common-wealth'; Chapman, *Byron's Conspiracy*, I, 1 (Pearson ed., II, 191).

Peace must not make men Cowards, nor keepe calme
Her pursie regiment [i.e., government] with men's smootherd breaths

160 **Assume . . . not.** This has become a proverb in a sense different from that which it bears in the context *Assume* means, not 'counterfeit' or 'pretend,' but 'Take to yourself in practice': 'Force yourself to act virtuously, even if you are not virtuously inclined'

161-165. **That monster . . . put on.** Custom, who is a monster because he takes away our feeling of the badness of evil habits, is yet an angel in this point, namely, that he likewise makes good actions easy. *Monster* and *angel* stand in antithesis. The Folios omit the passage. The Second Quarto reads *deuill for evil*. The emendation was suggested to Theobald by Thirlby. Many editors retain *deuil*, but *evil* is necessary to mark the antithesis between bad habits and good, and *monster* makes a satisfactory antithesis to *angel*—*frock or livery*. With a slight pun on *habits*.—**That aptly is put on:** that is easy to wear. Obviously the figure is not meant to suggest fraud or the concealment of evil intent under a cloak of virtue

166 **shall:** will certainly

167-170. **the next . . . potency.** Omitted in the Folios.

168, 169. **use:** habit.—**can . . . nature.** For, as the proverb runs, 'habit is a second nature.' Cf. Nashe, *The Unfortunate Traveller* (ed. McKerrow, II, 302): 'Vse is another nature.'—**either master**, etc.: The devil in a man (the evil in his character) may be kept under control by good habits or may even be quite eradicated thereby. *Maister* was first supplied in the Third Quarto (1611), which omits *either*. The Second Quarto has 'And either the.' See Textual Notes.

171, 172. **And when . . . you:** And when you show some sign of wishing for the blessing of heaven, I will be once more your dutiful son and ask your blessing at parting, as I used to do. Cf. i, 3, 53, 57, 81.—**you.** Emphatic.—**For:** as for

174. **To punish me with this.** Hamlet sees that the King will

at once perceive that he killed Polonius by mistake for him, and will take measures accordingly. See l. 211; iv, 1, 13-15.—**and this:** and this dead man

175. **their scourge and minister:** heaven's scourge (of punishment) and heaven's agent—minister of divine retribution. *Their* refers to heaven (l. 173). The use of a plural pronoun to refer to the singular noun *heaven* is common.

176. **bestow him:** stow him away; dispose of him.

178. **cruel.** Hamlet's harsh treatment of his mother still troubles him.

179. **Thus . . . behind:** Thus, in this interview, I have made a bad beginning (by killing Polonius when I meant to kill the King); but there is worse to come: that is, worse for you and Claudius; for I shall kill him sooner or later. The Queen does not understand this vague threat. Perhaps she thinks that *bad* refers to her son's treatment of her. *Thus* is the Folio reading. The Quartos have *This*, which Wilson retains, thinking that it refers to the dead body of Polonius

182. **bloat:** bloated with drinking. See note on i, 4, 12.

183. **mouse.** A common pet name. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v, 2, 19.

184, 187. **reechy:** nauseous—literally, smoky. Cf. *reek*.—**ravel . . . out:** disentangle, explain.—**essentially:** really; in fact.

190 **paddock:** toad.—**gib:** tomcat. The word is a contraction of *Gilbert* and was common as a cat's name. The animals here mentioned were regarded as unclean or uncanny. Cf. *Macbeth*, i, 1, 8, 9; iv, 1, 14, 15.

191. **Such dear concerns:** matters of such importance to one's self. For *dear* see i, 2, 182, note.

193-196. **Unpeg the basket.** The fable cited, though it has not been found elsewhere, is easy to reconstruct. An ape finds a basket full of birds on the housetop and opens it. The birds fly away. The ape gets into the basket and jumps out in an attempt to fly, but falls from the roof and breaks his neck.—**To try conclusions:** to try an experiment.—**down:** by the fall. Cf. Nashe, *The Unfortunate Traveller*, 1594 (ed. McKerrow,

II, 291)· 'My owne mother gaue I a boxe of the eare too, and brake her necke down a paire of staires'

200. **I must to England.** The King does not announce this voyage to Hamlet until iv, 3, 48, and then Hamlet pretends to take it as a novelty. The present passage shows that he had already learned of the project—how, Shakespeare does not say, but it is easy to imagine; for Hamlet was not destitute of friends among the King's counsellors and he was ever on his guard.—**Alack!** Merely a natural expression of sorrow at the coming separation. The Queen has no suspicion of the King's evil purpose.

202. **There's letters seal'd.** See iii, 3, 3 (note), iv, 3, 66; v, 2, 18. The Folio omits ll 202-210.

203. **adders fang'd:** adders with fangs—whose fangs have not been extracted. *Fang'd* is an adjective, not a participle.

205. **knavery:** some crime against myself. The precise nature of the plan Hamlet does not discover until they are at sea, when he opens the commission (see v, 2, 17-25).

206. **engineer:** engineer. The Elizabethan accent was on the first syllable, as in other words in *-eer*; *pioneer*, *mutiner*, *muleter*.

207. **Hoist:** hoisted, blown up.—**petar:** petard—a kind of bomb used especially for blowing gates open.

209. **at the moon.** There is grim humour in the use of *at* instead of *to*.

210. **When . . . meet.** Another figure from warfare. Hamlet imagines two plotters (the King and himself) as digging a mine and a countermine and suddenly coming face to face in their excavations.

211. **packing.** With a pun: (1) lugging; carrying a load on my back; (2) leaving the country in haste (on account of his death).

214. **most grave.** An obvious pun. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, iii, 1, 101, 102, where Mercutio, mortally wounded, says to Romeo, 'Ask for me to-morrow, and you shall find me a grave man.' Hamlet's levity of tone is, as on previous occasions, due to excitement and revulsion of feeling. Cf. i, 5, 116 ff., 150 ff.; iii, 2, 282 ff.

216 to draw . . . with you: to come to the end of my business with you. A regular phrase when one is approaching the end of a long speech. Cf. Latimer, *Seventh Sermon before Edward VI* (ed. Arber, p. 202): 'But to drawe towarde an ende' From this point, in the old story, the Queen heartily assists Hamlet in his plans of revenge.

ACT IV. Scene I.

The Quarto of 1676 is the oldest text to begin a new Act here. That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enter with the King has excited some surprise among the moderns. Obviously the Queen enters by one door, from her apartment; the King and his companions at the other door, from a conference in which Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have probably received their commission and have announced their readiness to depart. See iii, 3, 3, 24-26.

1. **matter:** meaning **profound:** 'deep, literally, and deep in significance' (Corson). For the accent see i, 4, 52, note.

4. **Bestow this place on us:** give it up to us; leave us.

7. **Mad.** Despite Hamlet's protestations in iii, 4, 139 ff., the Queen still believes that he is mad, and that he was really trying to kill a rat behind the arras. His seeing the Ghost and talking with it has confirmed this opinion. Thus she can conceal his protestation of sanity without being false to her husband.

11, 12. **brainish apprehension:** insane notion.—**good old man.** The regard of the King and Queen for Polonius is evident throughout the play. It should teach the actor who plays the part that the old Councillor, though at times ridiculous, is not to be made a mere ancient buffoon.

13. **It had been so with us.** The King immediately perceives what the Queen cannot know—that Hamlet had intended to kill him when he thrust his sword through the tapestry; and henceforth he has no doubt that Hamlet is sane and that he is his mortal enemy.—**us:** me. The 'royal *we*.'

14, 15. **His liberty.** Cf. iii, 1, 194, 195; iii, 2, 351, 352.—**to us:** to me.

16. **answer'd:** accounted for, explained—i.e., to the public. The King does not exaggerate the danger to the royal family that may result from the violent death of so great a noble as Polonius. See iv, 5, 96 ff.

17. **to us:** not, 'to you and me,' but 'to me, the King.' So also *our* in l. 19.—**providence:** foresight.

18. **short:** on a short leash, under control.—**out of haunt:** away from the society of others.

20. **We would not.** So people will say.

22. **divulging:** coming to light.

25, 26. **ore:** precious metal (especially gold)—**mineral:** mine or metallic vein.

27. **He weeps.** This white lie of the Queen's has so misled actors that Hamlet is often made to sob violently over the body of Polonius at the end of the preceding scene. She is exaggerating in her eagerness to spare Hamlet as much as possible. Cf. iii, 4, 173.

31, 32. **We must . . . excuse:** I must defend with all my royal authority and excuse with all my skill.

33. **with some further aid.** Henceforth, until Hamlet embarks for England, he is always under surveillance, though his guards are not always seen by the audience. Thus he has no opportunity to attack the King. Cf. iv, 3, 14. •

40. **And what's untimely done.** Both Second Quarto and Folio omit the rest of this line and the Folio omits ll. 41-44 (through *air*). The text accepts Capell's conjecture, which is an improvement on Theobald's 'For, haply, Slander'.

41, 42. **o'er . . . diameter:** across the whole breadth of the world.—**As level:** with as sure an aim.—**his blank:** its mark. The *blank* is literally the white circle or spot at the centre of the target.

44. **woundless:** invulnerable. Cf. i, 1, 145.

45. **My soul . . . dismay.** A sincere expression of the turmoil in the King's mind. The death of Polonius is, he knows, a serious matter, likely to shake his throne. See iv, 5, 98 ff.

Scene II.

1. **Safely stow'd.** Hamlet has not yet recovered from the excited mood in which we saw him at the very end of the preceding act. Hence the flippancy of his language.

6. **whereto 'tis kin.** See *Genesis*, iii, 19.

11, 12. **keep your counsel:** keep your secrets Cf. iii, 2, 152. Hamlet suggests that he knows well enough (but will not tell) what they and the King have in mind with regard to him. Cf. iii, 4, 202-210.—**demand'd of:** interrogated by.—**replication:** formal answer.

15 ff. **Take you me for a sponge?** Rosencrantz appears to understand *sponge* in the literal sense, regarding Hamlet's words as mere madness. Hamlet explains. The figure (as Caldecott notes) is derived from a passage in Suetonius (*Vespasian*, 16). 'Creditur etiam procuratorum rapacissimorum quemque ad ampliora officia ex industria solitus promovere, quo locupletiores mox condemnaret; quibus quidem vulgo pro spongiis dicebatur uti, quod quasi et siccos madefaceret et exprimeret umentes.' Cf. Andrewes, *Sermon at Saint Mary's Hospital*, 1688 (Oxford ed., 1841-1843, V, 23, 24): 'A practice it hath been . . . to use wealthy citizens as sponges, to roll them up and down in moisture till they be full, and then to wring all out of them again'; Mabbe, *The Rogue* (ed. *Tudor Translations*, ii, 34): 'Your scandalous and offensive persons, whom we properly compare unto Sponges, who what they sucke in one place, have it wrung from them in another'—**countenance:** favour.

18. **like an ape:** as an ape keeps things which he intends to devour. The text follows the Folio. The First Quarto has 'as an Ape doth nuttes.' The Second Quarto reads 'like an apple,' which Wilson retains, regarding it as an allusion to the apple-eating groundlings in the theatre. But the peculiar style of eating suggests apes rather than teatrogoers.

24, 25. **A knavish speech . . . ear.** Not in the general sense, but simply, 'My knavish speech sleeps in (is not understood by) your foolish ear.'

28, 29 **The body . . . body.** Mere nonsense, designed to carry out Hamlet's pretence of madness

31 **Of nothing.** Whalley cites the Prayer Book Version of *Psalm* cxliv, 4 'Man is like a thing of naught: his time passeth away like a shadow' The phrase had become an idiom to express the utmost contempt, as in Gabriel Harvey, *Four Letters*, 1592 (ed. Grosart, I, 184): 'A silly bullbeare, a sorry puffle of winde, a thing of nothing.' Wilson's suggestion is possible—that Hamlet is also hinting that the King has not long to live

31 **Hide fox, and all after!** Omitted in the Quartos. Doubtless the formula of a child's game similar to hide-and-seek. One person (the fox) hides, and the other players are to find him if they can. As he speaks, Hamlet runs off as if he were the fox ('Catch me if you can!'), and is followed by Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern. Cf. Moros, the silly character in Wager's comedy *The Longer Thou Livest, the More Fool Thou Art*, ca 1559 (AU, 3 r^o). 'When we play and hunt the fox, I outrun all the boyes in the schoole.'

Scene III

1. The Folio has the stage direction '*Enter King*', the Second Quarto, '*Enter King, and two or three.*' The King's opening speech (like that at the end of the scene) is obviously a soliloquy, as the Folio would make it. If there are 'two or three' with him, they must be Attendants, who stand back and are not supposed to listen. They can hardly be the 'wisest friends' mentioned in iv, 1, 38.

4, 5. **of: by.—distracted:** turbulent. Note the wildness of the mob described in iv, 5, 99-108.—**multitude.** Hamlet's popularity is one reason why the King has to be cautious in putting him out of the way. Another reason is the Queen's love for her son.—**in:** in accordance with.

7. **bear:** manage.

9-11. **Deliberate pause:** the outcome of careful thought.—**Diseases . . . at all.** Proverbial. Cf. Nashe, *Christs Teares over*

Ierusalem, 1593 (ed. McKerrow, II, 20) 'To desperate diseases must desperate Medicines be applyde.'

12. **bestow'd**: deposited, hidden

14. **guarded**. See iv, 1, 33, note

21-24. **politic**: skilled in statecraft Shakespeare may have remembered 'the Diets of the Empire convoked at Worms' (Singer).—**e'en**: just now, at this moment.—**Your worm . . . table**. Brandes compares Montaigne's *Essays*, ii, 2 (Florio's translation, 1603, p. 266): 'The heart and life of a mighty and triumphant Emperour, is but the break-fast of a seely-little Worme.'—**Your**. See i, 5, 167, note—**variable service**: two ways of serving the same kind of food.

28-30. **King**. *Alas . . . that worm*. Omitted in the Folios

33 **progress**: a journey of state undertaken by a monarch from one part of his realm to another Queen Elizabeth and James I were fond of such progresses.

38. **indeed**. In the emphatic sense 'in fact,' 'to speak plainly.'—**shall nose him**: will be sure to smell him.

43 **Which . . . grieve**: which we tender as dearly (hold at as high a rate) as we dearly (deeply) grieve. For *dearly* see note on i, 2, 182.

46, 47. **at help**: favourable.—**Th' associates**: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.—**tend**: await your convenience.—**bent**: ready. A figure from archery.

50. I see a **cherub**, etc A mad-sounding remark, meaning simply 'I have some notion of what they are.' Heaven's cherubim, of course, see everything

51, 52. **dear mother**. The maddest speech that Hamlet has yet made. The Queen is not present. The King corrects Hamlet patiently in his reply, which carries us back to i, 2, 64, 110-112.

56. **at foot**: 'at his heels,' as we say—**tempt him**: coax him. The King deprecates any disturbance.

58, 59. **seald . . . affair**. This makes it clear enough that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern do not know the contents of the sealed mandate that they carry to the English king. See note on i. 66.—**leans on the affair**: appertains to the business.

60. **England:** King of England. Cf. ii, 2, 59.—at aught: at any value. We still use the negative 'set at naught.'

61. **As . . . sense:** as [well thou mayst, for] my great power may well give thee a feeling thereof (i.e., of the value of my favour). Cf. iv, 7, 159.

63, 64. **thy free . . . us:** though technically free, yet thou standest in awe of me and payest homage accordingly.—**coldly set:** regard indifferently.

65. **process:** instructions, mandate

66. **letters:** a letter (Lat. *litterae*). See iii, 4, 202-204. This sealed mandate to the English king is quite distinct from the 'commission' given to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (iii, 3, 3). Its contents are a secret. Their commission gives them custody of the mandate and of Hamlet and directs them to deliver it and him. They are ignorant of its contents.—**congruing to:** congruent with; in complete agreement with. The Folio reads *coniuuring*, i.e., calling upon him solemnly —**effect:** purport.

67. **present:** instant, immediate. Thus, for the first time, we learn of the King's purpose.

68. **the hectic:** a continuous (as opposed to an intermittent) fever.

70. **Howe'er my haps:** whatever fortune I may have had or may have in the future

Scene IV

3. **conveyance:** escort. Danish heralds would accompany the troops of Fortinbras to certify that they come marching through the kingdom by royal license (see ii, 2, 77-80).

6. **in his eye:** in his royal presence.* Cf. i, 2, 116.

8. **softly:** slowly.

9-66. The omission of these lines in the Folio is a mere 'cut' to shorten the play when acted. It would not do to delete Fortinbras altogether at this point, for something was needed to account for his indispensable presence at the end of the play.

9 **powers:** forces, troops.

14 **Norway.** Cf 1, 1, 48.

15. **the main:** the whole country

17. **speak.** Emphatic, and so with a prolonged vowel which, with the change of pitch in utterance, gives the necessary disyllable. Cf. 'O' in l. 65 Pope reads 'speak it.'

19. **the name.** Emphatic: 'the mere *name* of conquest'

20. **To pay . . . farm it:** I would not take it on lease at a rental of five ducats a year.

22. **A ranker rate:** a higher rate. If the plot of ground were sold outright (in fee), the price would not yield an annual income of more than five ducats.

26. **debate:** fight out; settle by combat.

27. **imposthume:** internal abscess or ulcer. Hamlet means that such wars are the result of the corruption which comes from too much peace and luxury. It was an old theory that war is the natural exercise or gymnastics of the body politic, and that a country long at peace develops faults in the national character analogous to the diseases that idle luxury breeds in the human body. Cf Bacon's essay *Of the True Greatness of Kingdoms and Estates*: 'No body can be healthful without exercise, neither natural body nor politic; and certainly, to a kingdom or estate, a just and honourable war is the true exercise. A civil war, indeed, is like the heat of a fever; but a foreign war is like the heat of exercise, and serveth to keep the body in health; for in a slothful peace, both courages will effeminate and manners [i.e., morals] corrupt.'

32. **inform against me:** denounce me.

34. **market of his time:** 'that for which he sells his time' (Johnson); what he gets in payment for his time.

36, 37. **discourse:** faculty of reasoning.—**Looking before and after:** as one must do in reasoning logically—passing from premises to conclusions. See 1, 2, 150, note.

38. **capability and godlike reason.** Hendiadys. 'that capability of godlike reason.'—**godlike:** since reason makes us akin to the gods and distinguishes us from beasts.

39. **fust:** grow musty from lack of use.

40. **Bestial oblivion:** forgetfulness like that of the beasts (which do not remember their parents long).

41. **thinking . . . event:** considering too carefully what the outcome may be.

45. **Sith:** since.

46, 47. **gross:** literally, 'large'—hence (as here) 'easily seen,' 'obvious to the eye.'—**charge:** expense.

50. **Makes mouths at:** makes faces at; holds in contempt. Cf. II, 2, 381.—**event:** outcome, result.

53-56. **Rightly . . . stake:** True nobility of soul is—to restrain one's self unless there is great cause for resentment, but nobly to recognize even a trifle as such a cause when honour is involved. Hamlet rings the changes on the word 'great.' *Greatly* in l. 55 means 'nobly,' 'as a great soul should.'

61. **a fantasy:** a fancy, a whim, a mere notion—**trick of fame:** trifle of reputation; a matter affecting one's reputation in the very slightest degree.

63, 64. **Whereon . . . cause:** not big enough to hold the men needed to settle the case by combat.—**continent:** receptacle (that which *contains*).

65. **O.** Prolonged in utterance. Cf. l. 17.

Scene V.

1-20. The text follows the Second Quarto except in l. 16 ('Let her come in'), which the Quarto gives to Horatio. The Folio gives it to the Queen, to whom it also assigns (erroneously) 'Twere good . . . minds.' The Gentleman is expunged in the Folio, which gives his rôle to Horatio.

5, 6. **tricks:** plots and deceptions.—**Spurns enviously at straws:** takes offence angrily at trifles.

8, 9. **the unshaped . . . collection:** The formless, disconnected way in which she speaks prompts the hearers to gather up and patch together her distracted utterances—as one is always tempted to try to make sense out of the ravings of a delirious patient.—**aim:** guess.

10. **botch . . . thoughts:** patch the words together so as to adapt them to their own ideas, i.e., to the suspicions they already have about the sudden death of Polonius.

11-13. **Which.** The antecedent is *words* 'These words,' says the Gentleman, 'uttered as they are with an accompaniment of nods and winks and gestures, *do* appear to give some ground for suspicion.' Note the very cautious way in which he expresses himself: 'might indeed make one think that one might imagine—nothing *certain*, but many unhappy things.'

14, 15. It is significant that Horatio is a trusted (though unofficial) adviser at court.—**ill-breeding:** breeding evil; prone to evil thoughts.

18. **toy:** trifle.—**amiss:** misfortune

19 **artless jealousy:** unreasonable and unwise suspicion.

20. **spills:** destroys. The excessive suspicion which guilt brings with it often causes the guilty person to act in a way that rouses suspicion in others. Thus the Queen's avoidance of Ophelia might have caused that very suspicion which she wished to avoid.—**Enter Ophelia distracted.** So in the Folio The Second Quarto has simply '*Enter Ophelia*' (after l. 16). The First Quarto reads '*Enter Ofelia playing on a Lute, and her haire downe singing*'

22. **How now?** Merely a courteous greeting like 'How do you do?'

23 ff. The fragments that Ophelia sings appear to be bits that would be familiar to the Elizabethan audience, but only three lines (23, 24, 187) have been found that antedate the play. Coleridge rightly bids us note 'the conjunction here of these two thoughts that had never subsisted in conjunction, the love for Hamlet and her filial love, and the guileless floating on the surface of her pure imagination of the cautions so lately expressed and the fears not too delicately avowed by her father and brother concerning the dangers to which her honour lay exposed' (*Shakespeare Criticism*, ed. Raysor, I, 33, 34).

23, 24. These lines resemble the Walsingham song, popular in Shakespeare's time Cf. the version preserved in the Percy MS.:

'As yee came from the holy Land
Of Walsingham,
Mett you not with my true loue
By the way as you came?'

'How shold I know your true loue,
That haue mett many a one
As I came from the holy Land,
That haue come, that haue gone?''¹

—your true-love: your affianced lover

25. cockle hat and staff. The signs of a pilgrim. A cockle shell stuck in the hat was originally a sign that the wearer had been on a pilgrimage to the famous shrine of St. James at Compostela in Spanish Galicia. See *All's Well*, iii, 4, 4; iv, 3, 57 ff. That lovers are pilgrims and their lady-loves are saints was a common metaphor. See *Romeo and Juliet*, i, 5, 95 ff; and cf. *Merchant of Venice*, i, 1, 119, 120; ii, 7, 39, 40, *Two Gentlemen*, ii, 4, 145; *Sonnets*, xxvii, 6.

28. Say you? Is that what you wish me to tell you? Cf. l. 47.

37, 38. Larded: bedecked.—did not go. All the Quartos and Folios have 'not.' We are to regard it as Ophelia's insertion in the verse. She suddenly remembers that the words of the song do not quite agree with the facts of her father's burial, which was hasty and without the usual ceremonies. See ll. 83-84, 213-215. For this reason *not* (omitted by Pope and most editors, but defended by Caldecott) is retained by Dowden and Wilson.

41. God dild you! God yield (i.e., repay) you!—the owl. Douce tells the following story as popular in Gloucestershire.

Our Saviour went into a baker's shop where they were baking, and asked for some bread to eat. The mistress of the shop immediately put a piece of dough into the oven to bake for him, but was reprimanded by her

¹See *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript*, ed. Hales and Furnivall, III, 465 ff.; Delaney's *Garland of Good Will*, Percy Society ed., p. 111; Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, ii, 8, Child, *English and Scottish Ballads*, IV (1857), 191 ff; Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, I, 236, 237; *The Pepys Ballads*, ed. Rollins, II, 22, and VIII, 9.

daughter, who insisting that the piece of dough was too large, reduced it to a very small size. The dough, however, immediately afterwards began to swell, and presently became of a most enormous size. Whereupon, the baker's daughter cried out, 'Heugh, heugh, heugh,' which owl-like noise probably induced our Saviour for her wickedness to transform her into that bird. This story is often related to children, in order to deter them from such illiberal behaviour to poor people¹.

44. God be at your table! In her madness Ophelia uses a form of blessing that might be spoken by one who enters and finds a company at dinner.

45. Conceit: imagination—'Her mind is running on her father.'

48 To-morrow . . . day. 'This song alludes to the custom of the first girl seen by a man on the morning of this day being considered his Valentine or true-love' (Halliwell). See Douce, *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, 1839, pp. 470-473; Rose, *Folk-Lore*, XXX (1919), 63-70. In her madness Ophelia sings a song that she has heard in childhood. Her nurse, as Strachey suggests, may well have been as free-spoken as Juliet's. Everybody knows what happens in the way of indecorous speech when delirium stirs up the dregs of memory and puts an end to reticence.

49. betime: early.

53. dupp'd: opened. *Dupp* is a contraction of *do up* (cf. German *aufmachen*); so *doff*, *don*, and *dout* ('do out'). Cf. Edwards, *Damon and Pythias* (Collier's Dodsley, I, 231): 'Iche weene the porters are drunke, wil they not dup the gate to-day?'

58. By Gis: a common contraction of 'by Jesus.' Cf. Preston, *Cambises*, l. 237 (ed. Manly, II, 171): 'What, man, I will not sticke for that, by Gisse!'

61. Cock. A vulgar substitute for *God* in oaths. Cf. Justice Shallow in 2 *Henry IV*, v, 1, 1: 'By cock and pie, sir.'

¹For versions of this folk-tale see Halliwell's Folio Shakespeare; *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 2d Series, I (1907), 90; Leland, *The English Gypsies*, 1873, p. 16. Cf. Fletcher, *The Nice Valour*, iii, 3, 9-11 (and Dyce's note).

69. **cannot choose but weep:** cannot help weeping Cf iv, 7, 66.

76, 77. **this is the poison . . . death.** That it is Claudius who speaks must not blind us to the fact that this sentence is meant to sum up for us—the audience—the meaning of the madness that precedes, as the Gentleman's 'She speaks much of her father', (l 4) prepares us to understand it. Laertes agrees with the King's diagnosis (ll. 156 ff.). Disappointed love and Hamlet's madness had no doubt made Ophelia 'deject and wretched' (iii, 1, 163), but it is the mysterious tragedy of her father's death that has driven her mad. In her madness, thoughts of love and marriage of course recur and take strange shapes in their utterance—**this is.** Pronounced as one syllable (with prolonged *s*). Often written *this* (without *is*).—The Second Quarto inserts 'and now behold' after 'death' in l. 77.

77-96. The King feels genuine sorrow for Polonius and Ophelia; and, besides, their fate has involved him in such difficulties that he seems to be hemmed in by troubles which are ever drawing nearer

78, 79 **When . . . battalions.** The King's eloquent (and characteristic) elaboration of the familiar proverb. See iv, 7, 165, 166. Cf. Webster, *The Devil's Law Case*, II, 1 (ed. Lucas, II, 260). 'One mischief never comes alone'

81. **muddled.** The muddy bottom of the people's minds has been stirred up by angry suspicions, and their thoughts are roiled and turbid.

83, 84. **we:** I—not, you and I.—**done but greenly:** acted with childish folly.—**In hugger-mugger:** in haste and secrecy. Polonius had been buried without the ceremonies that befit his rank. See ll. 213-215.

89. **Feeds . . . clouds:** Instead of trying to discover the facts about his father's death, Laertes does nothing but wonder about it, making such wonder his only food for thought. Thus he keeps himself in a state of wilful uncertainty and confusion of mind.

90. **wants not buzzers:** lacks not persons who buzz or whisper in his ear; scandalmongers. Cf. *No-body and Some-body*,

1. 1912 (ed. Simpson, I, 352): 'Strange rumors and false buzzing tales'; Greene, *Orlando Furioso*, II, 1, 527-529 (ed. Collins, I, 238).

Here see thou buzze into the Counties eares
That thou hast often seene within these woods
Base Medor sporting with Angelica,

1 *Jerónimo*, II, 2, 28-30 (ed. Boas, p. 312)

Moreouer, I will buze Andreas landing,
Which, once but crept into the vulgar mouthes,
Is hurried here and there, and sworne for troth

92-94. **necessity, of matter beggar'd.** The necessity of making up a good story without materials drives these scandal-mongers to accuse the King.—**nothing stick:** by no means scruple.—**our person:** me, the King, as personally responsible for the death of Polonius—as his actual murderer Cf II 127, 149-152.—**In ear and ear:** now in one of his ears, now in the other. These 'buzzers' surround him.

95 a **murd'ring peece:** a kind of mortar loaded with a variety of missiles and intended to scatter its shot; also called a *murderer* Cf. Chapman, *Bussy d'Ambois*, III (Pearson ed., II, 59): 'like a murdering peece, making lanes in armies.' Steevens quotes Fletcher, *The Double Marriage*, IV, 2, 5-7:

A father's curses hit far off, and kill too;
'And, like a murdering peece, aim not at one,
But all that stand within the dangerous level

97. **my Switzers.** In Shakespeare's time the Swiss furnished bodyguards to many foreign princes. The Pope has still such a guard in the Vatican. Probably the most famous Swiss bodyguard known to history was that butchered by the populace on the outbreak of the French Revolution while defending Louis XVI. In honour of their heroic death the Lion of Lucerne has been erected. In Fletcher, *The Double Marriage*, IV, 1, the Duke of Sesse, disguised as a Swiss, declares:

'Tis the profession
Of all our nation to serve faithfully
Where th' are best paid

99-101. **overpeering of his list:** when it towers (literally, looks) above its boundary or limit (high-water mark). Cf. *King John*, iii, 1, 23: 'Like a proud river peering o'er his bounds.'—**the flats:** the low country near the sea.—**head:** armed band.

103-106. And . . . 'Choose we!' And, as if—with no remembrance of ancient institutions and no knowledge of settled custom—the world were to begin at the present moment, they, the rabble, assuming the right to ratify and support any and every suggestion that takes their fancy, cry out 'Let *us* choose!' *Ratifiers and props* refers to *they*, the rabble.

109 ff. In this terrifying situation the Queen appears as a fearless and high-spirited woman, passionately in love with her guilty husband; and Claudius himself meets the furious mob with calm dignity and splendid courage.

110 **counter.** A hound 'hunts counter' (*contre, contra*) when he follows the scent backward—away from the animal pursued.

113. **give me leave:** leave me and let me go in alone. Cf. ii, 2, 170.

114. **We will.** The fact that Laertes has the mob under control makes him all the more terrifying and emphasizes the King's fortitude.

115 ff. Henceforth Laertes appears as the typical avenger. He serves as a complete foil to Hamlet in this regard. He assumes that the King is somehow guilty of Polonius's death and acts accordingly, without weighing the evidence. Then, informed that Hamlet was the slayer, he joins in the King's plot without scruple and violates his own code of honour. Witness his confession in v, 2, 324 ff.

118. **brands.** Cf. iii, 4, 44.

122. **Let him go, Gertrude.** The Queen has caught hold of Laertes to prevent his attacking the King. Claudius controls the crisis with a master hand.

124, 125. **peep to:** look at from a distance. Traitors can get no nearer a king than the hedge or protecting barrier which 'divine right' builds about him; through this they can *peep*, but

that is all. The word and the figure are intentionally grotesque, expressing contempt.—**his:** its.

132. **grace:** regard for God's laws

134–136. **both the worlds.** He cares not what may happen to him, either in this world or the next, if only he can avenge his father's death. Contrast Hamlet's scruple in 11, 2, 626 ff.—**thoroughly:** thoroughly.

137. **My will . . . world!** Nothing shall stop me—not even the whole world—until I have had my will.

142, 143. **That swoopstake . . . loser:** that you are determined to include in your revenge both friend and foe, as if, in gaming, you were to sweep from the board all the money in sight, whether it belonged to the winner or to the loser. Cf Heywood, *2 Edward IV* (ed. de Ricci, sig. O4 r^o): 'I would the deuill were there to crie swoope-stake [i.e., I take them all]'; Middleton, *Your Five Gallants*, iv, 2 (ed. Bullen, III, 198) 'the old servingman swooped up all [in gaming].'

146 **pelican.** The mother pelican was supposed to draw blood from her own breast to feed her young Cf. Henry Medwell, *Nature* (ed. Brandl, *Quellen*, p. 76):

Who taught the pellycan her tender hart to carue
For she nolde suffer her byrdys to dye,

Mabbe, *Celestina* (ed. *Tudor Translations*, pp. 89, 90): 'The Pellicane, with her beake breaketh up her owne brest, that she may give her very bowels and intrals to her young ones to eat', *Edward III*, iii, 5, 110–113 (ed. Brooke, *Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p. 90).

A Pellican, my Lord,
Wounding her bosome with her crooked beak,
That so her nest of young ones may be fed
With drops of blood that issue from her hart

See Lauchert, *Geschichte des Physiologus*, 1889, pp. 8, 169–171, 211.

151. **as level:** with as sure an aim.—**pierce:** i.e., through all doubts and obscurities—as the sun pierces the clouds and mists.

153. Enter *Ophelia*. Rowe adds 'fantastically drest with Straws and Flowers': Wilson reads 'with flowers in her hand.'
 154 ff. We get the impression that this is the first time Laertes has seen Ophelia since she went mad. At all events, her entrance at this crisis revives and intensifies his rage against the unknown murderer, and threatens to undo all that Claudius has accomplished in the way of controlling him.

155. *virtue*: faculty

161-163. Dr. Johnson's paraphrase is (as usual) highly satisfactory: '*Love*, says *Laertes*, is the passion by which nature is most exalted and refined, and as substances refined and subtilised, easily obey any impulse, or follow any attraction, some part of nature, so purified and refined, flies off after the attracting object, after the thing it loves.' *Nature* is 'human nature.' *Instance* combines the two common meanings of 'sample' and 'proof.' Ophelia's nature has sent her 'wits' after her father (into the grave), as a precious part of itself in proof of love.

170, 171. A-down . . . a-down-a. For this chorus or burden cf. Deloney, *The Garland of Good Will*, Song 3.

Whenas King *Edgar* did govern this Land,
adown, adown, down, down, down,
 And in the strength of his Years he did stand,
call him down-a

—the wheel: the spinning wheel, to whose rhythmic motion songs and ballads were often sung. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, ii, 4, 45-47.

The spinsters and the knitters in the sun

.

Do use to chant it

—becomes it: suits the ballad and its tune. Cf. iv, 7, 79, note.—It is . . . steward. The song tells the story of the false steward. The ballad is unknown.

174 This . . . matter: This random talk of hers is more significant (of what she has suffered) than sane speech could be.

175 ff. Whether Ophelia actually brings flowers and herbs on the stage or simply imagines them, nobody can tell for cer-

tain. That she has culled precisely those that she mentions is out of the question. There is no indication in the old stage directions how the distribution (real or imagined) was made. Editors are pretty well agreed, however, that she gives rosemary and pansies to Laertes (as if he were her true-love), fennel and columbines to the King, and rue to the Queen—saving some for herself. The daisy remains in doubt. Perhaps she gave it to the King or the Queen. Wilson thinks she kept it (as well as the pansies) for herself. For the old 'language of flowers' see Clement Robinson, *A Handfull of Pleasant De-lites*, 1584, and the first few pages of Greene's *A Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, 1592 (ed. Grosart, XI, 213 ff.)

175-179. **that's for remembrance.** The smell of rosemary was thought to strengthen the memory. Cf. Greene, *Never Too Late* (ed. Grosart, VIII, 198): 'Shee hath guen thee a Nose-gay of flowers wherin as a top gallant for all the rest, is set in Rosemary for remembrance.'—**thoughts.** *Pansy* comes from the French *pensée*. Cf. Chapman, *All Fools*, ii (Pearson ed., I, 139):

Cornelio 'I pray, what flowers are these?
Gazetta The Pencie this
Cornelio O, thats for louers thoughtes

—A document in madness! A piece of instruction given to me in this mad talk! What the instruction is we learn from the next sentence: 'Thoughts and remembrance would indeed be fitting for me now.'

180. **fennel:** a symbol of flattery and deceit. Malone quotes Florio's dictionary, *A Worlde of Wordes*, 1598, p. 96: 'Dare pinocchio, to giue fennell, . . . to flatter, to dissemble' Nares quotes Greene, *A Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, 1592 (A3, lf 1 r°; ed. Grosart, XI, 214): 'Vppon a banke bordring by, grewe womens weedes, Fenell I meane for flatterers.' Steevens notes that columbine is called a 'thankless flower' by Chapman (*All Fools*, ii; Pearson ed., I, 139); but it does not appear whether this justifies us in ascribing that meaning to the flower as a symbol.

181 ff. **rue.** Since rue is bitter, and since its name coincides

with the verb *rue*, the herb became a symbol for sorrow or repentance. Its name *herb of grace* was associated with the idea of repentance for one's sins. Hence Ophelia thinks it a good Sunday name for the herb. Cf. *Richard II*, III, 4, 104-107.

Here in this place
I'll set a bank of rue, sour herb of grace
Rue, even for ruth, here shortly shall be seen,
In the remembrance of a weeping queen.

—with a difference. An heraldic term for a variation (usually slight) in a family coat of arms, indicating that the wearer belonged to a younger branch of the family. Ophelia means merely that the Queen's cause of sorrow differs from hers; but the Queen, and the audience, feel that rue should mean 'grief' in Ophelia's case, 'repentance for sin' in the Queen's. Henley quotes Greene, *A Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, 1592 (ed. Grosart, XI, 216): 'Some of them smild and said Rue was called herbe grace, which though they scorned in their youth, they might weare in their age, and it was neuer too late to say *Miserere*'

183 a daisy. Henley quotes Greene, *A Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, 1592 (A3, lf 2 r^o; ed. Grosart, XI, 218): 'Next there grewe the dessembling daisie, to warne such light of loue wenches not to trust euery faire promise that such amorous batchelers make them'. Dyce suggests that 'Ophelia means that the daisy is for herself' (cf. III, 1, 117-121); but the next sentence indicates (unless 'you' is emphasized or is addressed to the company in general) that she gives it to somebody. Clark and Wright think she gave it to the King or the Queen. —violets. Malone quotes Clement Robinson's *Handfull of Pleasant Dehtes*, 1584 (ed. Rollins, p. 4): 'Violet is for faithfulness'

187 For . . . joy. From an old song known to the mad Jailer's Daughter in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. 'I can sing "The Broom" and "Bonny Robin"' (iv, 1, 107, 108). See Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, I, 233, 234.

188, 189 Thought: melancholy thought, sorrow. Cf. III, 1, 85.—passion: passionate grief —favour: beauty

190 ff. For the tune see Chappell, I, 236, 237.

200. And . . . souls. An old formula of prayer.—of: on.—
God b' wi' you: good-bye

202. commune. Accented on the first syllable.

206, 207. collateral: indirect.—touch'd: 1 e, with guilt in the death of Polonius.

213 obscure. For the accent see note on i, 4, 52.

214, 215. trophy: anything that serves as a memorial or as a mark of honour.—hatchment: a tablet, with coat of arms and mourning emblems, set up on a tomb or a house-front, or over a gate.—formal ostentation: due and proper ceremony.

216, 217. as . . . earth: as if by a direct summons from God.—
That: so that.

218. the great axe: the axe of vengeance. This line may have been in Milton's mind when he wrote the famous verses in *Lycidas*, 130, 131.

But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more

6

Scene VI.

7, 8. Horatio's reply accords with custom. Cf Robert Taylor, *The Hog hath Lost his Pearl*, 111 (Collier's Dodsley, VI, 368):

Haddit. My young lord, God save you
Young Lord Wealthy And you also

But there is a touch of Horatio's mild humour (see i, 1, 19); for the sailor (who doubtless looks like the pirate that he is) may well need God's blessing.—'A: He.—an't: if it.

12-30. overlook'd: read over.—means: means of access.—
appointment: equipment.—thieves of mercy: merciful robbers.—they knew what they did: they knew what they were about; they understood what was for their own interest.—a good turn. Hamlet has promised to procure their pardon and, probably, to get them commissions in the navy.—too light . . . matter. A figure from gunnery: 'not weighty enough to do the

subject justice.'—**good fellows.** Humorously ambiguous; for this phrase was often equivalent to 'thieves.'

32. **give you way:** procure you access. For other indications that Horatio stands well with the King and Queen see iv, 5, 14-16; v, 1, 316.

Scene VII.

In the interval occupied by scene 'vi Claudius has explained to Laertes that Hamlet had killed Polonius by mistake for the King. Laertes has not taken time to consult his 'wisest friends' (iv, 5, 204).

5. **Pursued my life.** Cf. iii, 4, 24, 25, iv, 1, 13.

6. **proceeded:** i.e., by bringing Hamlet to trial for murder and treason.—**feats:** deeds, acts.

8, 9. **your safety:** regard for your own safety.—**mainly:** strongly, powerfully.—**reasons.** These two reasons were obviously genuine. The Queen's love for her son and the King's love for the Queen are strong motives in the drama, and the necessity of taking the Danish people into account has just been proved by their insurrection under the lead of Laertes.

13. **be it either which:** whichever of the two you may choose to call it.

14, 15. **conjunctive:** closely joined, dear.—**in his sphere:** i.e., in its hollow crystalline sphere, concentric with the earth (in accordance with the Ptolemaic astronomy)

16-18. **motive:** moving cause, reason. Cf. i, 1, 105; i, 4, 76; ii, 2, 587.—**count:** accounting, judgment, trial—**might:** could.—**the general gender:** the common people. Cf. iv, 3, 3, 4:

Yet must not we put the strong law on him
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude.

20. **the spring . . . to stone.** Reed notes the Dropping Well at Knaresborough (Yorkshire), described by Camden, *Britannia* (1590, p. 564): 'Sub quo fons est in quem ex impendentibus rupibus aquae guttatim distillant, vnde *Dropping Well*

vocat, in quem quicquid ligni immittitur, lapideo cortice breui obduci, et lapidescere obseruatum est.' Nearer home for Shakespeare were the baths of King's Newnham (Warwickshire), for which Dowden refers to Harrison's *Description of England*, ii, 23 (ed. Furnivall, I, 348, 349) Cf. Greene, *The Carde of Fancie*, 1587 (ed. Grosart, IV, 136): 'As though I had drunke of the Riuer *Lincestis* in *Bohemia*, which presentlie turneth whatsoeuer it toucheth into stones'

21. **Convert . . . graces**: change his fetters to honours.

26. **terms**: condition. Cf. Lyly, *Endymion*, v, 3 (ed. Bond, III, 75): 'I founde him in most melancholie and desperate termes.' *Terms* is very vaguely used in Elizabethan English so *in good terms*, *in fair terms*, etc., for 'in a good way,' etc

27. **if . . . again**: if I may commend her for what she was before she lost her mind.

28, 29. **Stood challenger . . . perfections**: was exalted above the whole contemporary world, challenging it to bring forward any other woman to equal her in excellence. Moberly detects an allusion to 'the coronation ceremony of the Emperor of Germany as King of Hungary; when on the Mount of Defiance, at Presburg, he unsheathes the ancient sword of state, and shaking it towards north, south, east, and west, challenges the four corners of the world to dispute his rights.'

30-35. Here the King shows for the first time a feeling of bitter enmity toward Hamlet.—**flat and dull**: tame and without spirit; incapable of resenting an injury.—**shall hear more**: i.e., when the news comes from England.—**I . . . we**. The King changes from the strictly personal *I* to the royal *we*

41 **Of**: from.

46, 47. **your kingly eyes**. A formal and courtly phrase (like 'High and Mighty') masking Hamlet's scorn and hatred Cf. i, 2, 116: 'in the cheer and comfort of our eye'; iv, 4, 6: 'We shall express our duty in his eye'; and similar expressions in which *eye* is used for 'the royal presence'—**pardon**: permission.

51 **abuse**: deceit, delusion.—**no such thing**: not what it seems to be; not a reality.

52. **character**: handwriting Cf. 1, 3, 59.

59 **how . . . otherwise?** How can it be true that he has returned? And yet, on the other hand, how can it be otherwise than true? The King finds it hard to believe that Hamlet has come back; yet he cannot explain the letter upon any other supposition.

60, 61. **Will you be rul'd by me?** Even in his horrified perplexity, the mind of Claudius works with its usual clearness and promptitude. He has already formed another plan to destroy Hamlet.—**Ay.** Dissyllabic Cf. note on *speak* in iv, 4, 17.—**So**: provided that

63. **checking at his voyage**: refusing to continue his voyage. A falcon is said to check 'when she forsakes her proper game, and follows some other of inferior kind that crossed her in her flight' (Dyce).—**that**: if that; if. Cf. l. 160.

66 **shall not choose but fall**: cannot help falling. Cf. iv, 5, 69.

68. **uncharge the practice**: acquit the plot of being a plot.

71. **the organ**: the agent—**It falls right**: The circumstances fit your wish.

73-77. **a quality**: an accomplishment.—**Your sum of parts**: the sum total of your accomplishments.—**siege**: rank—literally, seat.

78. **A very riband . . . youth**: a mere ornament of youth. It was the fashion for courtiers to wear a jewel or 'ribbon on the cap.

79-82. **youth no less becomes**, etc. In modern English we should invert the phrase 'The light and trivial sports that characterize youth are just as becoming to the young as the serious and dignified pursuits of sober years are to their elders' Cf. iv, 5, 172. Shakespeare is fond of metaphors from clothes.—**sables**. See iii, 2, 138.—**weeds**: attire.—**Importing health and graveness**: signifying due care for health and a proper regard for dignity. *Health* is contrasted with *light*, and *graveness* with *careless*. Young men dress lightly and carelessly, their elders wear warmer and more stately attire.

85 **can well on horseback**: are skilful riders. Feats of horse-

manSHIP, over and beyond mere riding, were a highly esteemed accomplishment with gentlemen of Shakespeare's time.

88-91. **As:** as *v.l.*—**incorps'd:** incorporated; made into one body.—**demi-natur'd:** so united as to form with the animal a Centaur—half man and half horse. Cf. Sidney, *Arcadia*, II, 5, 3 (ed. 1590, fol. 122 r°): 'as if Centaurlike he had bene one peece with the horse.'—**brave:** fine, noble.—**topp'd my thought:** surpassed anything that I could even think.—**in forgery of shapes and tricks:** in imagining feats of horsemanship.—**did.** Emphatic: 'actually performed.'

96-98. **He made confession of you:** He admitted that he knew you as an accomplished gentleman.—**art and exercise:** skill in both theory and practice. In *Troilus and Cressida*, IV, 4, 80, the 'Grecian youths' are described as 'flowing o'er with arts and exercise.'—**defence:** fencing.

101. **scrimers:** fencers (French *escrimeurs*).

104. **with his envy.** The King is going beyond the truth, but no doubt Hamlet piqued himself somewhat on his fencing.

108. **was your father dear to you?** The treacherous revenge which the King is about to propose is so abhorrent to what he knows to be the feelings of a gentleman that he fears some urging may be necessary. The savage exclamation 'To cut his throat i' th' church!' convinces him that Laertes will have no scruples (l. 127).

111-124. These reflections are curiously similar to the moralizing of the Player King in III, 2, 196-209. Claudius cannot get 'The Mousetrap' out of his head—and no wonder!

112-114. **that:** because.—**passages of proof:** facts of experience.—**qualifies:** weakens.

115-124. Omitted in the Folios.

115-117. **There lives . . . it:** The very intensity of love serves to abate it, as the flame of a lamp makes the snuff (the charred piece of wick) that deadens the flame and reduces the light.—**still:** always, forever.

118. **plurisy:** excess, plethora—used especially of an excess of blood in the system. Cf. Greene, *Mamillia*, 1583 (ed. Grosart, II, 41): 'His nature seemes very precious, and yet very

perillous: euen like the patient, which by ouer much blood falleth into the Plurisie'; *Two Noble Kinsmen*, v, 1, 62-66.

119. **his own too-much**: its own excess.—**Tha:** what.

120. **this 'would'**: our will to act

123, 124. **And then . . . easing**: when we have lost the will to do a thing, and yet say to ourselves 'We *should* do it' this acknowledgment relieves our conscience somewhat, but weakens our moral fibre, since we rest content with merely confessing our duty instead of doing it. Similarly, a sigh is a relief, but (according to the old notion) it draws blood from the heart and thus weakens it Cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii, 2, 97: 'With sighs of love, that costs the fresh blood dear'; 3 *Henry VI*, iv, 4, 22. 'bloodsucking sighs.'—**to the quick o' th' ulcer!** Let me probe the sore to the quick. Let me put the crucial question without further talk.

127. **To cut his throat i' th' church!** The readiness of this reply is welcome to the King, but its crude ferocity produces in his mind that contempt which an intellectual villain must feel for mere brute rage. Yet he suppresses his disgust, and with admirable suavity assents to the principle of unscrupulous vengeance.

132. **We'll put on those shall**: We'll incite, instigate, persons who shall.

135. **remiss**: careless; unsuspicious by nature.

136, 137. **generous**: noble-minded. The frankness of the King's praise of Hamlet for qualities that are the opposite of those here shown by Laertes, indicates how sure he now feels of his accomplice — **peruse**: scrutinize.

138. **shuffling**: trickery; sleight of hand.

139. **unbated**: not blunted. Rapiers for practice were blunted but had no button on the point.—**a pass of practice**: a thrust with this treacherous weapon. *Practice* means 'plot,' 'treachery' (as in l 68). Cf. the words of the repentant Laertes in v, 2, 327-329:

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and envenom'd The foul practice
Hath turn'd itself on me

141. I'll anoint my sword. This is Laertes at his worst. He forgets his own code of honour in his reckless pursuit of revenge, although he is aware that Hamlet killed Polonius by mistake for the King. The idea, however, of fencing with poisoned swords is not unknown in Elizabethan literature. Cf. *Soliman and Perseda*, 1, 3, 29-33 (ed Boas, Kyd, p. 169):

In Italy I put my Knighthood on,
Where, in my shirt, but with my single Rapier,
I combated a Romane much renownd,
His weapons point impoisoned for my bane,
And yet my starres did bode my victory

142. **unction**: ointment.—**mountebank**: quack.

144, 145. **cataplasm**: poultice.—**Collected from**: composed of.—**simples**: medicinal plants.—**virtue**: medicinal efficacy.

146, 147. **Under the moon**: i.e., anywhere on earth. An idiomatic phrase: cf. *King Lear*, iv, 6, 26; *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv, 15, 68. It modifies *all* rather than *virtue*.—**withal**: with it.

148. **gall**: scratch; break the skin; draw blood. Cf. iii, 2, 252

151. **fit us to our shape**: adapt us (in our actions) to our plan.

152. **that . . . performance**: if our intention should show itself because of our failure to carry it out adroitly.—**that**: if that, if. Cf. il. 63, 160.

155. **did blast in proof**: should burst (fail) when put to the test. A 'metaphor taken from the trying or proving of fire-arms or cannon' (Steevens).—**Soft!** Wait a minute!—literally, slowly.

156. **solemn**: formal.—**your cunnings**: your skill as fencers. Cf. iii, 4, 139.

158-161. **dry**: thirsty.—**As make**, etc. 'as [hot and dry you must become, for] make your bouts,' etc. Cf. iv, 3, 61.—**that**: when that; when Cf. il. 63, 152.—**for the nonce**: for that express purpose.

162. **stuck**: thrust. What Sir Toby calls 'the stuck-in' (*Twelfth Night*, iii, 4, 304). It is the vernacular equivalent of

stoccado (*Merry Wives*, II, 1, 234). Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, III, 1, 77. 'Alla stoccata ; Marston, *Antonio's Revenge*, I, 2, 72 (ed Bullen, I, 111) 'I would pass [i.e., thrust] on him with a mortal stock.'

165, 166. **One woe . . . follow.** Cf. IV, 5, 78, 79.

168 ff. The Queen's speech is lyrical rather than dramatic. It is Shakespeare the poet that speaks rather than Shakespeare the dramatist. But it is a masterpiece of its kind and any dramatic loss is our gain.

168. **aslant.** So the Folio. The Quarto reading, *ascaunt*, means the same thing.

169. **hoar:** grey—as the leaves of the willow are on the under side.

170. **There . . . come.** So the Folio. The Second Quarto reads 'Therewith fantastique garlands did she make Of Crow-flowers,' etc. Wilson follows the Quarto, remarking that the willow is 'the emblem of disconsolate love.' But the context shows that the Folio is right.

171-173. **crowflowers.** Two or three different flowers are so called.—**long purples:** orchids.—**liberal:** licentious in their talk.—**cold:** chaste.—**dead men's fingers.** Cf. *Roxburghe Bal-lads*, ed. Chappell, I, 261. 'Dead-man-thumb.'

174. **coronet:** woven into wreaths for the head.

175. **envious:** malicious

179, 180. **tunes.** So the Folio and the First Quarto. The Second Quarto reads *laudes*, i.e., 'hymns or psalms of praise.'—**incapable of:** insensible of, having no feeling for. Cf. III, 4, 127.

181. **indued:** adapted by nature.

187 ff. **Too much,** etc. This speech seemed far less artificial to Shakespeare's contemporaries than it does to us, for such punning expressions had come to be natural in Elizabethan style and were by no means inconsistent with deep feeling.

189. **It is our trick:** To shed tears is a natural human trait.

191. **The woman will be out:** All the womanish qualities of my nature will have spent themselves, and I shall be remorseless in my vengeance. The convention that 'tears are woman-

ish' (*Romeo and Juliet*, III, 3, 110) recurs in great variety of expression. Cf. *As You Like It*, III, 4, 3; *Henry V*, IV, 6, 28-32; *Richard III*, I, 2, 164; *Coriolanus*, V, 6, 45; *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV, 2, 34-36. See *Macbeth*, IV, 2, 29, and note.

193. **this folly douts it:** this natural weakness (my weeping) puts it out. Laertes can no longer control himself. He rushes from the stage in a passion of tears.—**douts.** The Second Quarto reads *drownes*. Cf. I, 4, 37.

ACT V Scene I.

1-5. **Clowns:** rustics, boors—an elderly sexton and his young helper.—**in Christian burial.** A regular phrase; not a mistake of the Clown's. Cf. *Martin's Month's Minde*, 1589 (ed. Grosart, Greene, I, 194, 195): 'They might not therefore burie him in Christian buriall.'—**when she . . . salvation:** when she wilfully seeks to go to heaven before her time.—**straight:** straightway, immediately—**crowner.** A regular pronunciation of *coroner*; not a blunder.

6, 7. **in her own defence.** The Clown knows that self-defence is a justification for homicide, and he ludicrously infers that it may justify suicide also.

9. **se offendendo:** in self-offence—the Clown's blunder for *se defendendo*, 'in self-defence.'

11 ff. The Sexton's logic (as Sir John Hawkins suggests) may be an echo of arguments elaborated in a lawsuit of 1554—a case resulting from the death of Sir James Hales, who had committed suicide by walking into a river.

Walsh [one of the counsel] said that the Act [of self-destruction] consists of three Parts. The first is the Inagination, which is a Reflection or Meditation of the Mind, whether or no it is convenient for him to destroy himself, and what Way it can be done. The second is the Resolution, which is a Determination of the Mind to destroy himself, and to do it in this or that particular Way. The third is the Perfection, which is the Execution of what the Mind has resolved to do. And this Perfection consists of two Parts, viz the Beginning and the End. The Beginning is the doing of the Act which causes the Death, and the End is the Death, which is only a Sequel to the Act (*Plowden's Reports*, translation, 1779, p. 259).

In summing up, the judge remarked:

Sir James Hales was dead, and how came he to his Death? It may be answered, by drowning, and who drowned him? Sir James Hales. And when did he drown him? In his Lifetime. So that Sir James Hales being alive caused Sir James Hales to die, the Act of the living, was the Death of the dead Man. And for this Offence it is reasonable to punish the living Man, who committed the Offence, and not the dead Man (p. 262).

13. **argal.** The Clown's corruption of *ergo*, 'therefore,' a word often used in formal reasoning. Cf. *All's Well*, i, 3, 53.

17. **will he nill he:** will he or will he not; willy-nilly; whether he will or no.—**null.** A contraction of *ne* (the negative) *will*. Cf. *The Taming of the Shrew*, ii, i, 273.

25. **quest:** inquest.

26. **an't:** on't; of it.

29-31. **there thou say'st:** You're right in that!—**count'nance:** authorization. The Clown ludicrously speaks of the liberty to commit suicide as one more unfair advantage which the aristocracy have over the common people.—**even-Christen:** fellow Christian. Equivalent, in colloquial use, to 'fellow creature,' 'neighbour.'

36, 37. **Was he a gentleman?** The Clown is startled to hear Adam styled a gentleman, for he is familiar with the old rhyme:

When Adam delved and Eve span,
Where was then the gentleman?

Cf. Dekker, *The Wonderful Yeaere*, 1603 (ed. Grosart, I, 77): 'Though he haue no more Gentilitie in him than Adam had (that was but a gardner).' See also John Heywood, *The Spider and the Fle* (1556), xlv, 27; *Songs and Carols* (ed. Thomas Wright, Warton Club), p. 2; Lydgate, *Minor Poems*, ed. MacCracken, II, 823.—'A: he.

44, 45. **confess thyself—:** Confess thyself an ass; or perhaps, as Malone suggests, 'Confess thyself and be hanged.' 'Confess and be hanged' was a common proverb. Cf. *Othello*, iv, 1, 38.—**Go to!** Enough! A protesting exclamation—literally, 'Go away!' 'Get out!'

49. **frame:** structure.

51, 52. **does well**: is a pretty good answer to my conundrum.

59. **unyoke**: unyoke your team of oxen, call it a day's work.

62. **Mass**. A common oath Cf. 11, 1, 50.

63-68. **your**. See note on 1, 5, 167: 'your philosophy.'—

Yaughan: Yohan, Johan. Some alehouse keeper in the neighbourhood.—a **stoup**: a big cup or mug.

69 ff. **In youth**, etc. The Sexton, as Theobald noted, sings mangled fragments of a poem printed in Tottel's *Miscellany*, 1557, and entitled 'The aged louer renounceth loue' (ed. Rolins, pp. 165, 166):

- 1 I Lothe that I did loue,
 In youth that I thought swete
 As time requires for my behoue
 Me thinkes they are not mete,

- 3 For age with stelyng steppes,
 Hath clawed me with his c[r]owche,
 And lusty life away she leapes,
 As there had bene none such

- 8 A pikeax and a spade,
 And eke a shrowdyng shete,
 A house of claye for to be made,
 For such a gest most mete

- 13 For beauty with her bande
 These croked cares hath wrought
 And shipped me into the lande,
 From whence I first was brought

71. **contract**: shorten; make it pass pleasantly.—**a**. Clark and Wright explain these *a*'s as indicating the singer's 'drawling notes.'—**behoove**: behoof, advantage.

76. **hath made . . . easiness**: has made for it (has given it) an easy quality in his case; has made it a commonplace occupation which leaves his mind at ease.

77, 78. **The hand . . . sense**: The hand that is unaccustomed to manual labour has more sensitiveness, is less callous.

80, 81. **clawed**: seized.—**hath . . . land**: has stopped my voyage and sent me ashore.—**intil**: in to

84. **jowls**: dashes

85. **that**. The antecedent is *Cain's*: 'the jawbone of Cain, who,' etc. Skeat, however, thinks that *jawbone* is the antecedent and reports an old tradition that Cain's weapon was the jawbone of an ass (6 *Notes and Queries*, II [1880], 143; *Academy*, October 26, 1895, p. 343).

87, 88. **o'erreaches**: gets the better of.—**one . . . God**: one who was clever enough, while he lived, to disregard God's laws and apparently to escape unscathed.

96-100. **chapless**: jawless—i.e., lacking the lower jaw.—**mazzard**. Like *pate*, an old cant word for 'head'—**trick**: special skill; **knack**—**loggets**: little logs—a game in which the players throw pieces of hard wood at a stake or wooden wheel.

103. **For and**. This means 'and', but *and* is often used in the same way.

107, 108. **quiddits**: hair-splitting definitions, such as those attempted in ll. 10-13. *Quiddity* (*quidditas*) is an old scholastic word for the 'whatness' of anything, i.e., its essential nature.—**quilletts**: quibbles, subtle distinctions. Cf. *Mabbe, Celestina* (ed. *Tudor Translations*, p. 69). 'some quillet or quirke of Law.'—**tenures**: holdings of real estate.

109. **sconce**. Another cant term for 'head.'

111-121. **buyer of land**. There are constant references in Elizabethan and older literature to the ambition of persons not belonging to the 'landed gentry' to purchase estates and thus make themselves gentlemen. In this case it is a successful lawyer that Hamlet imagines as the purchaser.—**statutes**. Statutes merchant and statutes staple are 'particular modes of recognition or acknowledgement for securing debts, which thereby become a charge upon the party's land' (Ritson). Cf. *Histrionastix*, iv, 1 (ed. Simpson, II, 56):

Whilst slaves tye fast our Lands

In Statute Staple, or these Marchants bands.

—**the fine . . . his recoveries**: the final outcome of his fines and the total acquired by his recoveries. 'Fine and recovery' was a legal process for changing an entailed estate into an estate

in fee simple (absolute possession).—**double vouchers.** A recovery with 'double voucher' was so called because two persons were '*vouched*' or called upon, to warrant the tenant's title' (Ritson).—**his fine pate:** his subtly clever head.—**indentures:** agreements or contracts. These were drawn up in duplicate on a single sheet of paper or parchment and were then cut apart in a zigzag (indented) line. Their fitting together at this line was proof of genuineness.—**conveyances:** deeds.—**inheritor:** possessor, owner.—**ha?** An interrogative 'huh?' 'eh?'

126. **sirrah?** A form of *sir*, used (as here) in addressing an inferior or to express anger or contempt; often (to boys) as a playful and affectionate term.

131-140. Hamlet uses the familiar *thee* and *thou* to the Sexton, but the Sexton uses the respectful *you* in reply. The inevitable pun on *he* is elaborated into a game of repartee. The Sexton wins by punning on *quick*, which Hamlet has used in the sense of 'living.'

146. **rest her soul:** God give her soul repose!

148-155. **How absolute the knave is!** How the fellow insists upon accuracy in language!—**by the card:** by the compass, observing every point; punctiliously.—**equivocation:** ambiguity.—**picked:** choice, exquisite, refined.—**that the toe . . . courtier:** that the peasant has become almost as polished in language and manners as the courtier.—**galls his kibe:** follows him so closely that he rubs and irritates the chilblain on the courtier's heel. Cf. iii, 2, 252. So D'Avenant, *The Cruel Brother* (ed. Maidment and Logan, I, 174):

But I'll follow your heels so close, as I'll
Go near to tread upon your kibes.

157. **Fortinbras.** See i, 1, 80-95; i, 2, 17-25.

170. **as mad as he.** The supposed eccentricity of Englishmen gave rise to the notion on the Continent that they were a nation of madmen. Clark and Wright quote Marston, *The Malcontent*, iii, 1, 96 ff. (ed. Bullen, I, 258): 'Your lordship shall ever find . . . amongst an hundred Englishmen, fourscore and ten madmen.'

177. **thirty years.** This figure and the 'three-and twenty' in l. 191 involve a problem as to Hamlet's age. See Introduction.

183. **year.** A good old form of the plural.

187. **your.** Cf. i, 5, 167; iv, 3, 21 ff.

191. **you.** The 'ethical dative,' which gives a colloquial touch to the style but adds nothing to the sense.

199. **Yorick.** Futile attempts have been made to explain this name as Danish, but, until it can be shown that Polonius, Claudius, Ophelia, Marcellus, and Bernardo are also Danish names, we need not trouble about the matter. So far as its form goes, *Yorick* looks like a corruption of *York*, but Jerick is a German peasant in the old play of *Alphonsus* (wrongly ascribed to Chapman) and Joris is the Duke of Brunswick's fool in Rowlands, *A Foole's Bolt*, 1614, pp. 22 ff.

205. **it:** the mere thought of it, i.e., of his bearing me on his back.

213. **chapfall'n:** lacking the lower jaw, chapless (l. 97); with a pun on the sense of 'down in the mouth,' 'disconcerted.'

215. **favour:** appearance of the face. ,

227 **too curiously:** with unreasonable ingenuity.

231. **modesty:** moderation, reasonableness.

236-240. An impromptu bit of versification by Hamlet. Cf. iii, 2, 282-285, 292-295.—**Imperious:** imperial.—**soft!** enough! hush! Cf. i, 1, 126.

241. **Who is this?** Hamlet has not heard of Ophelia's death or even of her madness, and this fact must be remembered in judging his passionate behaviour at the grave. There is nothing strange in his ignorance. He has not yet gone to court, and Horatio would not blurt out the sad news as soon as he met him at the pier.

244. **Fordo:** destroy.—**it:** its? See note on i, 2, 216.—**estate:** rank.

245. **Couch we:** Let us conceal ourselves.

247. **noble:** referring not to the character of Laertes but to his rank.

250-254. **doubtful.** Though Ophelia fell into the stream by accident (iv, 7, 175), yet her demeanour, and the fact that she

did not call for aid or attempt to save herself, had made the clergy fear that she had committed suicide.—**great . . . order.** The King's command has prevailed against the usual rule of the Church.—**For:** instead of —**shards:** potsherds, bits of broken pottery.

255. **crants:** garland. The word (spelled also *cranse*, *crounce*, *corance*) is singular, not plural. It comes from the Dutch *crans* or the German *kranz*. Such garlands, at the burial of maidens, were carried to the grave and afterwards hung up in the church.¹ In Middleton's play, *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, v, 4, Moll's coffin is 'adorned with a garland of flowers, and epitaphs pinned on it, attended by many matrons and maids.' Cf. a letter of 1668-9 'Many have died this winter; . . . and the Church is full of garlands, hung up for those who died in youth' (*Diary and Correspondence of Dr. John Worthington*, II, 304).

256. **strewments.** See ll. 266-269. Rolfe cites *Cymbeline*, iv, 2, 285. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, iv, 5, 79-80, 89; v, 3, 281; *Winter's Tale*, iv, 4, 127-129 (Clark and Wright).—**the bringing home:** to the grave—her 'long home' (*Ecclesiastes*, xii, 5)—as a bride was brought (escorted) to her new home by her friends. For the marriage rites as 'sadly parodied' by the funeral of a maiden, Clark and Wright compare *Romeo and Juliet*, iv, 5, 84-90.

260 a **requiem.** So the Second Quarto. The Folio reads 'sage Requiem,' i.e., 'a requiem in due form.'

271. **thy most ingenious sense:** thy mind, endowed by nature with the finest faculties.

276, 277. **Pelion.** The lofty mountain upon which the Giants piled Mount Ossa in their attempt to scale Mount Olympus, which rose to the home of the gods in the sky.

279. **Conjures:** lays a spell upon. The word may be accented

¹For descriptions and pictures see Jewett, *The Reliquary*, I (1860), 5-11; XXI (1881), 145-148; Syer Cuming, *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, XXI (1875), 190-195; Minns, *Papers and Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club*, IV (1905), 235-239; Burne, *Shropshire Folk-Lore*, pp. 310-313, *Denham Tracts*, II (1895), 33, *New Shakspere Society Transactions*, 1887-1892, p. 180.

on either syllable.—the wand'ring stars: the planets. *Planet* means 'wanderer' (πλανήτης)

280, 281. **This . . . Dane.** 'Hamlet here asserts himself as rightful King of Denmark' (White). Cf. i, 2, 44. Only the First Quarto has the stage direction: *Hamlet leaps in after Learies.*

282-286. Hamlet's calmness is not self-possession, but violent self-restraint in the attempt to be calm.—**splenitive and rash.** Synonymous 'excitable and quick-tempered.' Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, iii, 1, 162, 163:

Could not take truce with the unruly spleen
Of Tybalt deaf to peace

The spleen was regarded as the seat of any sudden fit of wrath, laughter, or excitement.

290. **wag:** move up and down—such motion being the last sign of life in a dying man.

291. **what theme?** The Queen regards Hamlet as raving mad. His language, however, shows no incoherency until l. 313.

293. **their quantity:** their little bit. Spoken contemptuously. Cf. iii, 2, 4; iii, 4, 75.

296. **forbear him.** Addressed to Laertes: 'Let him alone,' 'Do not harm him'

297, 298. **'Swounds.** See ii, 2, 603.—**thou't:** thou'lt, thou wilt.—**Woo't:** wilt. The form is a contraction of *wolt*, the *l* having become silent like the *l* in *would*. It was either rustic or colloquial, and its use here expresses angry contempt. The whole speech is a kind of passionate parody of the style of Laertes in ll. 274-277.

299. **drink up esill:** drain bumpers of vinegar. The word *esill* (Old French *aisil*) was associated, in everybody's mind, with the draught of vinegar and gall given to Christ at his crucifixion (*Matthew*, xxvii, 34). This, though intended as an *anæsthetic*, was regarded as an additional torment. Cf. *Kalendar of Shepherdes*, 1506 (ed. Sommer, III, 156): 'Than was he nayled on the crosse, . . . and than gaue hym eyse and gall

to drynke.¹ Dowden notes that vinegar was supposed to increase melancholy, and Lucas (*Times Literary Supplement*, XXIX [1926], 512) detects an allusion to the hypocritical tears which crocodiles were supposed to shed (cf. *Othello*, iv, 1, 256, 257). But assuredly Hamlet does not mean that the sorrow of Laertes needs stimulus or that it is not genuine: he is merely piling up extravagant hyperboles.

302. **quick**: alive.

305. **the burning zone**: that zone or belt of the celestial sphere that is bounded by the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn.

306, 307. **mouth . . . rant**. Synonymous. Cf. III, 2, 3, 4.

307-310. **mere**: utter, stark.—**patient**: calm.—**couplets**: twins.—**disclos'd**: hatched.

313. **But it is no matter**. At this point Hamlet recollects himself. In his excitement he had quite forgotten that madness is his cue and he does not realize that his words to Laertes have seemed insane to the hearers. Hence he now reverts to his habitual style when counterfeiting insanity. Lines 314, 315, therefore, are not to be brought into logical connection with what precedes or with the situation at all. Certainly Hamlet does not mean 'Laertes must have his whine and his bark. If Hercules cannot silence dogs, much less I, who am little like that hero' (Dowden) or 'Bluster away, my young Hercules: but poor Hamlet's time will come' (Verity).

315. **the dog . . . day**. A familiar proverb. The King may or may not regard Hamlet's words as a veiled threat.

317, 318. These two lines are heard by Laertes only.—**patience**: calm endurance under stress of emotion.—**in . . . speech**: by thinking of what we said last night (with regard to your revenge). See iv, 7, 124 ff.—**to the present push**: to the immediate attack or onset into immediate action.

¹Cf. also *The Castell of Perseverance*, sts 269, 290 (*Macro Plays*, pp. 170, 177); *The Frere and the Boye*, ll. 1-3 (ed Hazlitt, *Early Popular Poetry*, III, 60); *The Prophetes of Rymour*, ll. 625, 626 (ed Murray, *Thomas of Erceldoune*, p. 61); Skelton, *Now Synge We*, ll. 38-40 (Riverside ed., 1, 169), Gabriel Harvey (ed. Grosart, II, 71); Tobias Venner, *Via Recta ad Vitam Longam*, 1620, p. 97. See especially Tolman, *Modern Language Notes*, IX (1894), 241-247; Hart, the same, XI (1896), 29.

320-322. At l. 319 the Queen starts to follow Hamlet. Lines 321 and 322 are (like ll. 317, 318) heard by Laertes only.—**a living monument.** If the Queen hears this, she will take *living* in the sense of 'lifelike.' Cf. Tourneur, *The Atheist's Tragedy*, III, 1, 1, 2:

Set downe the body Pay Earth what shee lent
But shee shall beare a liuing monument.

To Laertes, however, the words mean that Hamlet shall be sacrificed as an offering to Ophelia's memory. Compare the sacrifice of Alarbus, demanded by Lucius 'ad manes fratrum' in *Titus Andronicus*, I, 1, 96 ff.

Scene II.

1, 2. **this.** Hamlet has just finished telling Horatio certain early incidents of the voyage.—**the other:** the rest of the story.—**the circumstance:** the details which I have told you.

6. **mutines:** mutineers.—**bilboes:** a kind of portable stocks carried on board ship. They consisted of a heavy horizontal bar of iron, to which were attached rings for the ankles. 'The punishment at the bilboes is when a delinquent is put in irons, or in a kind of stocks made for that purpose, the which are more or less heavy and pinching, as the quality of the offence is found to be, upon good proof' (Capt. Nathaniel Boteler, *Dialogues*, 1634, ed. Perrin, p. 17).—**Rashly:** obeying a sudden impulse.

7-11. **And . . . will.** Parenthetical.—**let us know:** let us recognize as a fact of experience.—**pall:** fail; come to naught.—**our ends:** the outcome of our plans.

15. **Finger'd:** laid hold on.

17. **to:** as to.

18. **Their grand commission.** See iii, 3, 3, and note.

20, 21. **Larded:** garnished, tricked out.—**Importing:** signifying.—**health:** welfare.

22. **hoo!** An interjection expressing fright.—**such bugs . . . life:** interspersed with such outbursts as to the danger of leaving a terrible creature like me alive.—**bugs:** bugbears.

23. **on the supervise:** as soon as the document had been read over (by the English king) — **no leisure bated:** no time for delay being subtracted from the immediacy of the execution. The idea is expressed from an odd point of view, and indeed, the whole speech is in a vein of fierce and bitter humour.

24. **No . . . axe.** Hamlet's own words—not a quotation from the mandate. So (in l. 47): 'not shriving time allow'd.'

30. **Or:** a by-form of *ere*. Hamlet means that before he could prepare his brains, they had begun to act in carrying out a plan. He is thinking, perhaps, of the difficulty he had found in devising a scheme to force the King to confess, and of the play that he finally used for that purpose.

32-34 **fair:** in legible script (proper for a clerk or secretary) There is no special thought of the Italian or 'Roman' hand (*Twelfth Night*, iii, 4, 31) — **statists:** statesmen.—**A baseness:** a plebeian accomplishment. Cf. Heywood, *The Witches of Lancashire* (Pearson ed., IV, 189) 'It hath been held that it is the part of a Gentleman, to write a scurvy hand'; Claudius Hollyband, *Campo di Fior*, 1583 (ed. Byrne, *The Elizabethan Home*, 1925, p. 14):

Maurice. He said that there was no shorter waye to learne much, then to write faire and swifte

Mendoza. But our noble men for the most parte, doe not obeye this commandement which thinketh it a good and an honorable thing not to write well—thou wouldest saye it were the scratching of hennes.

36, 37 **yeoman's service:** substantial service, though in a humble capacity.—**effect:** purport.

39-42. Hamlet burlesques the words of his own document, which he had composed in the formal and stately style used by the King in the original.—**wheaten garland:** since agriculture can flourish only in time of peace.—**a comma:** as a connecting link. The language is scornfully grotesque. 'The *Comma* is the note [i.e., mark] of *connection* and continuity of sentences; the *Period* is the note of *abruption* and *disjunction*' (Johnson).

43. **as's of great charge.** A standard pun on *ass* and *as*. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, ii, 3, 184, 185; Lyly, *Mother Bombe*, iv, 2 (ed. Bond, III, 212):

Stellio. I wyll talke with Memphios sonne, but as for Riscio—¹

Memphio As for Dromio—¹

Halfpenny Asse for you all foure¹

Charge means 'burden' (as applied to the *asses*) and 'earnest conjuration' (as applied to the *as's*).

45, 46 **debatement:** discussion or consideration.—**sudden:** instant, immediate.

47 **shriving time:** even time enough for confession and absolution. It would be as absurd to take this passage literally, and to infer that the services of a priest were denied to Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern, as it would be to suppose that the King's message contained an order not to grind the axe (l. 24). Hamlet merely emphasizes the idea of immediate death—of 'giving the men short shrift.'

48. **ordinant:** operative in controlling events; practically equivalent to 'foreordaining' Hamlet recurs to the thought of the 'divinity that shapes our ends' (l. 10)

50-52. **model:** copy.—**writ:** writing, document.—**impression:** i.e., of the seal

53. **changeling.** Spoken with bitter humour. A *changeling* is an elf or imp, often hideously ugly and always ill-tempered and malicious, substituted by the fairies for a baby stolen from the cradle. In the present instance Hamlet's changeling is fair to look upon, but its character is evil enough. Cf. Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, i, 10, 65.

56. **to't:** to their death. Cf. Heywood, 2 *Edward IV*, ii, 4 (1599; ed. de Ricci, sig. R r^o)

Keeper. The men are patient, and resolute to die;

The capitaine and that other gentleman

Haue cast the die whether shall suffer first.

Brackenbury How fell the Lot, to stranguide or to him?

Keeper. The guiltlesse passenger must first go toot

57-62. Horatio has not meant to suggest that there was anything wrong in Hamlet's counterplot. Indeed, he feels some satisfaction in the poetical justice that has overtaken the King's agents. But Hamlet, who is less calm by nature, is sensitive on

that point, and feels that he must justify himself to his friend, as he has already justified himself to his own conscience.

58, 59. **defeat**: destruction.—**their own insinuation**: their own act in worming themselves into this affair. Cf. iii, 3, 3, note. Though Rosencrantz and Guildenstern did not know the contents of the 'grand commission' (l. 18), they had put themselves into the King's hands unreservedly and could expect no mercy from Hamlet. Cf. iii, 4, 31-33:

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better Take thy fortune.
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.

60-62. **baser**. Hamlet speaks as a prince, conscious of his royalty and convinced of the difference between kings and common men. *Baser* is not used in a moral sense, but refers to rank and dignity. These lines indicate the proper position of Claudius in the drama. He is the 'mighty opposite,' the great antagonist, of Hamlet, and no contemptible foe. The struggle between him and his stepson is a battle of the giants.—**pass**: thrust.—**fell**: fierce.

63. Hamlet's constitutional disinclination to deeds of blood is still strong. In ll. 63-70 he sums up all the reasons why the King deserves death and adds that he ought to be killed to prevent his doing further mischief.—**thinks't thee**: seems it to thee. Cf. *methinks*, 'it seems to me.'—**stand me now upon**: is incumbent upon me, is my duty.

65-70. **Popp'd**. Contemptuously familiar language. Compare what Hamlet says of the King's 'stealing the diadem from a shelf and putting it in his pocket' (iii, 4, 100, 101).—**election**. See iii, 4, 99, and note.—**my proper life**: my own life.—**To quit him**: to pay him off.—**canker**: eating sore, cancer or ulcer.—**In**: into.

68-80. Omitted in the Second Quarto.

71, 72. **It must . . . there**. Horatio, tacitly accepting Hamlet's argument, suggests that immediate action is necessary and will be merely self-defence.

74. **A man's life's . . . 'one.'** Wilson detects an allusion to a

rapier thrust. He compares l. 291 and *Romeo and Juliet*, II, 4, 23 'One, two, and the third in your bosom.' The meaning depends (as so often in spoken speech) on tone and action. Delivered in one way, the line would be only a pensive reflection: 'What meaning has "shortly," after all? For what can be shorter than this life of ours?' Delivered in another way, the line is a menace to the King's life.

76-79 **I forgot myself.** Hamlet's own account of his behaviour refutes the theories both of those critics who think he was then acting the madman and of those who think that he was really insane.—**For . . . his.** A clear indication that Laertes the revenger was meant to be the foil to Hamlet the revenger.—**court.** The Folio has *count*; corrected by Rowe.—**bravery:** ostentation.

81 ff. The language and manners of Osric are a good-natured satire on the affectations of many young gentlemen at the English court. One of the peculiarities of his style is the use of words in a forced or unusual sense. Polonius has a touch of the same affectation. Compare the language of Emulo in Dekker, Chettle, and Haughton's *Patient Grissil* (1599).

84. **waterfly:** an unsubstantial creature, all wings and iridescence, skimming along the surface of life. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, v, 1, 37-39: 'Ah, how the poor world is pest'ed with such waterflies—diminutives of nature!'

86-89. **Thy state . . . gracious:** Thy condition is the more virtuous—**his crib . . . mess.** A disrespectful way of saying 'He will be sure to be admitted to the King's table.'—**a chough:** a silly, chattering creature. The term *chough* (pronounced *chuff*) was applied to the jackdaw and other noisy birds of the same family. Cf. *All's Well*, IV, 1, 22: 'Chough's language—gabble enough, and good enough.'

91. **I should:** I was to.

95 ff. In this conversation Hamlet beats Osric at his own game; but no harm is done to Osric (who is really a good fellow), for he never suspects that Hamlet is laughing at him.

96. **bonnet:** cap. The contest in courtesy is won by Osric, who holds his cap in his hand to the last, as we see from l. 109.

100-104. **indifferent:** rather — **complexion:** temperament. — **I cannot tell how:** somehow or other. Theobald points out the resemblance to Juvenal, iii, 102, 103:

Igniculum brumae si tempore poscas,
Accipit endromidem si dixeris 'Aestuo,' sudat

109. **for mine ease.** A common phrase when one politely insists on standing hat in hand. Such a contest in courtesy is well illustrated by a model dialogue between two gentlemen, Giordano and Edward, in Florio's manual of Italian and English conversation (cited by Malone):

G. Why do you stand bareheaded? you do yourself wrong

E. Pardon me good sir, I do * for my ease.

G. I pray you be couered, you are too ceremonious

E. I am so well, that me thinks I am in heauen.

G. If you loue me, put on your hat

E. I will doe it to obay you, not for any plesure that I take in it (*Florios Second Frutes*, 1591, Chap vii, p 111).

109-150. **Sir, here . . . unfellowed.** This is cut down to a single sentence in the Folio 'Sir, you are not ignorant of what excellence *Laertes* is at his weapon.'

110-116. **absolute:** perfect, finished. — **differences:** qualities or talents that distinguish him from others; accomplishments. — **soft society:** agreeable manners. — **great showing:** splendid appearance. — **feelingly:** with a due sense of his merits. — **card or calendar of gentry:** a guide or model of courtly manners. As one consults a card (compass) or a calendar for accurate information and sure guidance, so every gentleman may learn how to behave by observing *Laertes*. Cf. v, 1, 149. — **the continent . . . see:** the sum total of whatever qualities one gentleman would like to find in another. A *continent* is literally 'that which contains.' Cf. iv, 4, 6^a

117-120. **definement:** definition. — **perdition:** loss — **to diuide . . . sail:** To make an inventory of his fine qualities would stagger the reckoning power of one's memory, and yet, after all, the inventory would come far short of his real excellence.

The excellence of Laertes is a fast boat that sails steadily on; the inventory is another boat, which tries to overtake the leader, but *yaws* continually and thus falls far behind. A boat yaws when she steers badly, so that she does not hold her course but swings her bow from side to side and thus loses headway.—**dozy**: confuse, stagger.—**neither**: after all.—**in respect of**: in comparison with.

120-125. **in . . . extolment**: to give him the praise he truly deserves.—**of great article**. An *article* is an 'item,' but the word is here used collectively: 'with great qualities', 'with a great amount of fine traits.'—**his infusion**: the nature with which he is infused or endowed.—**of such dearth and rareness**: of such rare excellence. *Dearth* and *rareness* mean the same thing: 'rarity.'—**his semblable is his mirror**: the only person who resembles him is his own image in the looking glass.—**who else would . . . more**: Anybody else who wishes to keep pace with him, can do so only as the shadow follows the substance.

128, 129. **The concernancy, sir?** What is the purport of all this?—**Why . . . breath?** Why do we attempt to describe the gentleman in our words, which are too crude to do him justice? 'Words,' as the Queen has told us, are 'made of breath' (iii, 4, 197)

131-136. **Is't . . . tongue?** Does Osric find it impossible to understand his own lingo when another man speaks it?—**do't**: win the game; succeed in nonplussing Osric.—**nomination**: naming, mention.—**All's**: all his.

141, 142. **yet . . . approve me**: If you, who are yourself a fool, supposed me not to be ignorant, that belief of yours would not be much evidence in my favour. The remark does Osric no harm; for he does not understand it, nor does Hamlet mean that he should.

145-150. **I dare not . . . excellence**: I dare not say that I know how excellent Laertes is, for such an assertion would be an implied claim of equal excellence on my own part, since only the excellent can judge of excellence.—**to know a man**, etc.: 'No man can completely know another, but by knowing himself, which is the utmost extent of human wisdom' (Johnson).

—**himself**: one's self —**weapon**. Affectedly used as a plural.—**imputation**: reputation.—**them**: i.e., his weapons.—**meed**: deserts, excellence.

152 **Rapier and dagger**. In fencing it was common to carry a dagger in the left hand to assist in warding off the blows or thrusts of one's opponent.

153. **two**. A mere quibble on Hamlet's part: he is calling attention to Osric's affected use of *weapon* as a plural.—**but well**: but never mind.

154-160. **Barbary horses**. Proverbially excellent in Shakespeare's day.—**impon'd**: staked, wagered.—**assigns**: appurtenances.—**hangers**: straps attaching the sword to the belt.—**dear to fancy**: tastefully designed; pleasing to the fancy.—**responsive to the hilts**: corresponding to (harmonious with) the hilts in design.—**of very liberal conceit**: very elegantly conceived, i.e., designed.

162, 163. **edified by the margin**: instructed by a marginal note. This remark is omitted in the Folio.

164-166. **carriages**. This use is an affectation of Osric's and, as such, is humorously criticised by Hamlet, to whom the word suggests a gun carriage, the wheeled frame that *carries* a cannon.

173-176. **laid**: wagered.—**a dozen passes**. The terms of the wager seem clear enough. There are to be a dozen passes, or 'bouts,' and the King bets that the total score of Laertes shall not exceed Hamlet's by three hits. Thus if the score stood 7 for Laertes and 5 for Hamlet, the King would win; so also if it stood 6 to 6, or 6 to 4 with two draws. But if it stood Laertes 8, Hamlet 4, the King would lose; so also if it stood 7 to 4, with one draw. *Twelve for nine*, however, cannot by any twist be brought into accord with these terms. Many attempts have been made to clear up the passage, but they are not worth repeating. As Dr. Johnson sensibly remarks, 'The passage is of no importance; it is sufficient that there was a wager.'—**vouchsafe the answer**: kindly consent to meet Laertes in this match. Hamlet purposely misunderstands Osric and thus forces him to explain.

180-185. **the breathing time of day with me:** the time of day when I take my exercise. To *breathe* or to *breathe one's self* was common in this sense.—**I will gain.** This is not a case of *will* for *shall*. Hamlet means 'I am willing to gain nothing,' i.e., 'I shall not object to receive no reward but the disgrace and the extra hits.'

186. **redeliver you:** carry back your reply.

189-192. **I commend my duty:** I offer my devoted service; I declare myself your humble servant. See 1, 2, 39, note Hamlet puns on *commend*, which meant also (as now-a-days) 'to praise.'—**Yours, yours.** Spoken, not slightly, but in a courteous tone and with a polite gesture.—**for's turn:** for his purpose.

193-201. **This lapwing . . . head.** A mere jest at Osric's juvenile self-sufficiency: 'This young fellow is as forward as the lapwing, which begins to run before it is fairly out of the shell.' The lapwing was proverbially precocious. Cf. Chapman, *Revenge for Honour*, II, 1 (Pearson ed., III, 304):

Boldnesse inforces youth to hard atchievements
Before their time, makes them run forth like Lapwings
From their warm nest, part of the shel yet sticking
Unto their downie heads.

—**away:** i.e., from the nest.—**comply:** use compliments, i.e., ceremonious language.—**the drossy age:** the degenerate present, in contrast with the Golden Age. In this sentence Hamlet more or less unconsciously continues to speak in the style that he has adopted in his talk with Osric.—**outward habit of encounter:** the fashionable habits of society. Doubtless there is (as often) a pun on *habit* in the sense of 'dress,' 'attire.' *Encounter* means 'meeting.'—**yesty collection:** frothy mess.—**carries . . . opinions:** These accomplishments, trivial as they are, make them thoroughly acceptable even to persons of the choicest and most refined judgment. *Fann'd* and *winnowed* are identical in sense. To emphasize and explain a word by adding *and* with a synonym is one of the commonest of rhetori-

cal devices.¹ Tollet aptly cites *Troilus and Cressida*, v, 3, 41. 'Even in the fan and wind of your fair sword' Cf. the same, i, 3, 27, 28:

Distinction, with a broad and pow'rful fan,
Puffing at all, winnows the light away

The Second Quarto reads 'prophane and trennowed', the Folio, 'fond and winnowed' *Fann'd* is Warburton's correction. Wilson calls it 'tautological' and accepts Tschischwitz's *profound*, which involves an extraordinarily mixed metaphor. Moberly explains *fond and winnowed* as 'absurd and over-refined,' but this misrepresents the sense of *winnowed*.

203, 204. **commended him:** sent a message with his compliments.

209. **If his fitness speaks:** if his convenience calls for the match.

214. **In happy time:** very opportunely—a mere phrase of courtesy, like 'I am glad to hear it.'

214, 215. **to use . . . entertainment:** to meet Laertes in a cordial and friendly way. *Entertainment* often means 'welcome' or 'reception' Cf. ii, 2, 392 — **fall to play:** begin to fence.

221. **in continual practice.** Very significant. Cf. ii, 2, 308.

222-228. **how ill . . . heart:** how uneasy I feel. Hamlet has a presentiment of evil. *Ill* is regularly used of any uneasy or uncomfortable physical feeling. As everybody knows, such presentiments are often accompanied by physical symptoms.—**gaingiving:** misgiving.—**obey it.** Neither Hamlet nor Horatio suspects a plot; for, though they distrust the King, they believe Laertes to be a man of honour, and the presence of the Queen is an additional security. Yet Horatio, the philosopher, urges Hamlet to obey his instinctive reluctance of mind, for he knows that such feelings sometimes come from ideas

¹Cf. 'high and palmy' (i, 1, 113), 'rank and gross' (i, 2, 136), 'free and bounteous' (i, 3, 93); 'traduc'd and tax'd' (i, 4, 18); 'knotted and combined' (i, 5, 18), 'whuff and wind' (ii, 2, 495); 'deject and wretched' (iii, 1, 163); 'holy and religious' (iii, 3, 8), 'delicate and tender' (iv, 4, 48).

that are well-founded, though too indistinct to be expressed at the moment.

230. **we:** i.e., men like you and me, who believe in God's providence.

231. **sparrow.** *Matthew*, x, 29 'Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.' Cf. *Luke*, xii, 6.—it: death.

234, 235. **is all:** is the only important matter.—Since . . . **betimes?** **Let be:** 'Since *no man knows aught* of the state of life which *he leaves*, since he cannot judge what other years may produce, why should he be afraid of *leaving* life betimes? Why should he dread an early death, of which he cannot tell whether it is an exclusion of happiness or an interception of calamity? I despise the superstition of augury and omens, which has no ground in reason or piety; my comfort is, that I cannot fall but by the direction of providence' (Johnson). Brandes notes the resemblance of Hamlet's reflections to Montaigne's Essay (i, 19) on 'Learning how to Die.'¹ The Second Quarto reads 'since no man of ought he leaues, knowes what ist to leaue betimes, let be', the Folio, 'since no man ha's ought of what he leaues. What is't to leaue betimes?' The text follows Dr. Johnson's emendation but keeps 'Let be,' which he and the Folio omit (see Textual Notes). Wilson accepts the Quarto reading and paraphrases 'Since no man can tell from anything on earth ("of aught he leaves") what is the right moment to die, why trouble about it?' But *to die betimes* certainly means 'to die young.'—**Let be:** Let it go. Do not try to dissuade me.

237 ff. 'I wish Hamlet had made some other defence; it is unsuitable to the character of a good or a brave man to shelter himself in falsehood' (Johnson). It is odd that Dr. Johnson failed to see that Hamlet's particular falsehood here is inseparable from the general falsehood involved in his counterfeiting madness. If his conduct here is to be reprehended, the blame

¹'No man dies before his time The time you leave behinde was no more yours, than that which was before your birth, and concerneth you no more' (Florio's translation, ed. 1603, p. 38).

should go farther back and attach itself to his whole stratagem, and no one has ever taken ethical ground against that.

239. **This presence:** the King and Queen, in whose presence I speak. Cf. l. 251

242. **exception:** objection, resentment.

249. **faction:** party.

251. **this audience:** this royal audience. Cf. l. 239.

253, 254. **so far . . . That:** so far that you may believe that, etc.

255-261. 'A piece of satire on fantastical honour. Though *nature* is satisfied, yet he will ask advice of older men of the sword, whether *artificial honour* ought to be contented with Hamlet's submission' (Steevens). This explanation is sound, but the passage is not satirical. The distinction between *nature* (i.e., natural affection) and *honour* (the punctilio of society and convention) has already been made by Hamlet himself in l. 242 Cf. Nashe, *Have with You to Saffron-Walden*, 1596 (ed McKerrow, III, 21): 'After the same manner that one of these *Italionate* conferences about a *Duell* is wont solemnly to be handled, which is when a man, being specially toucht in reputation, or challenged to the field vpon equall tearmes, calls all his frends together, and askes their aduice how he should carrie himselfe in the action.'

259, 260. **masters:** experts in these questions — a voice . . . **peace:** a decision that may serve as a precedent for reconciliation.

261-263. **ungor'd:** unscathed; free from disgrace.—**But . . . wrong it.** The monstrous hypocrisy of these words, spoken as they are by a young nobleman whose instinct and training are honourable, shows the blind ruthlessness of the doctrine of revenge and stands in marked contrast to Hamlet's caution and conscience in his own case

264. **frankly:** freely; 'with a heart free from rancour.

266. **your foil.** A courteous pun. *Foil* often means 'a bit of tinsel placed under a gem to enhance its brilliancy,' and so, 'that which sets off something by contrast.'

268. **Stick fiery off:** stand out in brilliant contrast. Cf. Chapman, *The Maske of the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn*

(Pearson ed., III, 93). 'The humble variety whereof, stucke off the more ampie the Maskers high beauties.'

272. **odds:** 1 e, in the value of the stake. The King's stake is much greater than that of Laertes.

274. **is better'd:** has improved since he went to France.—**odds:** i.e., in the terms of the wager. Laertes may score two points more than Hamlet and still lose the match.

275, 276. **let me see another.** Laertes picks out the unbated and poisoned foil.—**likes:** pleases, suits.

277. Nothing can be less warranted than the idea (which Wilson 'assumes' from l. 317) that Osric is an accomplice in the plot. If that were the case, dramatic method would have made his guilt clear.

278-280. **stoups:** big goblets.—**quit . . . exchange:** repay Laertes (score a hit) in the third bout.

283. **an union:** a great and flawless pearl. See Textual Notes.

286, 287. **kettle:** kettledrum.—**the cannoneer.** See i, 2, 125-128; i, 4, 7-12.

298. **shall:** will surely.—**fat.** This adjective has given unnecessary trouble. The Queen, who understands sport (as her metaphor in iv, 5, 109-110 shows), sees that Hamlet is panting and perspiring a little and remarks that he is fat, i.e., 'not in perfect training,' 'not quite trained down.' A modern trainer might use the same word, or he might say that Hamlet is 'rather soft.' *Fat* does not here mean 'corpulent.' Nobody who remembers how *fat* was used by old people in New England sixty years ago will be misled by this adjective.¹

¹For Shakespeare's time and later cf. Sidney, *Arcadia*, i, 16, 5 (ed. 1590, fol. 69 v^o). 'very faire, and of a fatnes rather to allure, then to mislike'; Greene, *Never Too Late*, 1590 (ed. Grosart, VIII, 187) 'a louely fat paire of cheekes'; *The London Prodigall*, 1605 (B3, leaf 2 r^o). 'fat, faire, and louely'; Heywood, *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*, iv (Pearson ed., V, 328) 'fat, fresh and fayre'; Defoe, *Roxana* (Cripplegate ed., XII, 20) 'They saw me . . . thin and looking almost like one starved, who was before fat and beautiful'. Wilson accepts the suggestion of Bieber (*Anglistische Arbeiten*, III [1913], 69), Tilley (*Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, XXIV [1925], 315 ff.), and W. H. Dunn (*Times Literary Supplement*, May 26, 1927) that *fat* means 'sweaty.' Cf. E. v. Schaubert, *Anglia*, LII (1928), 93-96.

299. **napkin**: handkerchief.

300. **carouses**: drinks a full draught. See i, 4, 8.

301. **Good madam!** With a gesture, in courteous acknowledgment of the Queen's toast

304. **dare not**. Hamlet has no suspicion that the cup is poisoned. He means that he does not think it wise to drink (in response to the Queen's toast) until the match is over.

307. **almost . . . conscience**. This aside makes the confession of Laertes in ll. 324-331, 338-342, sound less like too sudden a conversion.

309, 310. **pass**: thrust.—**make a wanton of me**: treat me indulgently; play with me (instead of doing your best to win). A wanton is 'a spoiled child'

312. **Nothing neither way**. Thus ends the third bout. the score is, two hits for Hamlet (ll. 292, 297) and one draw

313. The First Quarto has the stage direction: *They catch one anothers Rapiers, and both are wounded, Laertes falls downe, the Queene falls downe and dies*. The other Quartos have no stage direction. The Folios read *In scuffling they change Rapiers*. Just how this trick of exchange was managed on the Elizabethan stage is uncertain. In fencing with rapiers only (i.e., without daggers), there was a recognized series of plays in which each fencer seized the other's sword at the hilt and the result was such an exchange. The movements are shown in a series of cuts in Saint-Didier's *Traicté* (1573), reproduced by Egerton Castle (*Schools and Masters of Fence*, 1885, pp. 59, 60, figs. 30-33). Perhaps Hamlet and Laertes drop their daggers and fence with foils only, thus carrying out the aforesaid series of manœuvres

317. **as . . . springe**: like a fool, caught in my own snare. A woodcock, in its stupid curiosity, was supposed to fumble with the snare and thus achieve its own capture. See i, 3, 115, note.

319. **She . . . bleed**. Claudius is panic-proof. See iv, 5, 120 ff.—**sounds**: swoonds, swoons.

328. **Unbated**. Cf. iv, 7, 139.—**practice**: plot.

332. **toe**: i.e., not only 'unbated' (as he now sees) but also 'envenom'd.'

333. Thus Hamlet's vengeance is, to all intents and purposes, self-defence

335. **hurt**: wounded.

337. **Drink off this potion!** 'It is probable, that the expression is figurative; and spoken upon making the King, who had declar'd he was only "hurt," taste again of his "sword"' (Capell). Line 339, then, must also be figurative; but anything is better than to make Hamlet force the dying King to drink. Capell supports his explanation by a reference to l. 353.

339. **temper'd**: mixed, compounded.

346. **mutes**: players who have no speaking parts in the drama.

347, 348. **as . . . arrest**: as [I have not, for] this fierce sergeant, etc.—**sergeant**: a sheriff's officer. Cf. Peele, *Edward I*, i, 1, 62, 63 (ed. Bullen, I, 88, 89):

They cannot scape th' arrest of dreadful death,
Death that doth seize and summon all alike.

351. **the unsatisfied**: those who are uninformed.

364. **o'ercrows**: overcomes. The figure is from cockfighting, and the word (like the sport) was common in Elizabethan times.—**spirit**: vital force, vitality, life

366, 367. **th' election**. Cf. l. 65.—**voice**: suffrage, vote. The crown of Denmark was elective (within limits), but nomination by the reigning king had much influence in determining his successor, and Hamlet is, for a moment, practically King of Denmark. We may infer that Fortinbras is related to the Danish royal family. Cf. ll. 400, 401

368, 369 **occurents**: occurrences.—**solicited**: brought on (this tragedy).

375. **This . . . havoc**: These dead bodies proclaim that a massacre has taken place. *Quarry* is the regular word for the game killed in a hunt. *Havoc* was the old battle cry for 'No quarter.' Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, iii, 1, 270 ff. *Cries on* means simply 'cries out,' 'shouts,' not 'calls for' or 'exclaims against.' Cf. *Othello*, v, 1, 48: 'Whose noise is this that cries on murder?'

376. **toward**: in preparation. Cf. i, 1, 77. Scandinavian warriors believed that, if slain in battle, they were translated to

Valhalla (*Valholl*), Odin's palace in the sky, where they were to spend their time in feasting and fighting. Though Shakespeare may have known nothing about this pagan creed, the present passage accords with it and sounds appropriate in the mouth of young Fortinbras. Cf. *1 Henry VI*, iv, 5, 7: 'Now thou art come unto a feast of death.'

386. **jump**: exactly, opportunely. Cf. i, 1, 65.

393. **accidental judgments**: judgments of God brought about by means apparently accidental. This refers particularly to the death of the Queen and of Laertes. Cf. l. 318. *Casual slaughters* merely repeats the idea.

394. **put on**: instigated, prompted. These deaths, Delius thinks, were those of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. If so, *cunning* describes Hamlet's cleverness in changing the death mandate, and *forc'd cause* indicates the necessity of self-defence which prompted him. Possibly, however, Horatio alludes to the death of Hamlet, to which Laertes was instigated by the King's craftiness and his own 'forced' (exaggerated) passion of revenge, and to the death of Laertes.—**forc'd**. Cf. *King Lear*, i, 1, 172. 'strain'd pride.'

400, 401. **rights of memory**: unforgotten rights.—**my vantage**: my presence (with troops) at this opportune moment.

403-406. **from his mouth**. See l. 367.—**more**: more voices, more suffrages.—**presently**: at once.—**On**: on account of.

406-414 In Elizabethan tragedy, the person of highest rank among the survivors regularly makes the speech which brings the play to a formal close. This necessity, indeed, accounts for the presence of Fortinbras in HAMLET. But for him, there would be no one left of sufficient rank to fulfil this office.

408, 409 **put on**: advanced to the kingship, and so put to the test.—**To have prov'd most royally**: to have shown himself every inch a king. This tribute from a fighter like Fortinbras should be a sufficient answer to those critics who regard Hamlet as a weak creature.—**passage**: death.

411. **Speak**. Subjunctive. 'Let the music, etc., speak.'

413, 414. **shows**: appears.—**ordinance**: ordnance.

TEXTUAL NOTES

[Qq indicates the exact agreement of four Quartos—Q₂ (1604, some copies dated 1605), Q₃ (1611), Q₄ (undated), Q₅ (1637) Q₅ without mention of the others indicates the agreement of the same four except in some detail of spelling. Q₁ (1603) is occasionally cited Ff indicates the exact agreement of all four Folios—F₁ (1623), F₂ (1632), F₃ (1664), F₄ (1685) F₁ without mention of the others indicates agreement of the four except in some detail of spelling. The figures 1 and 2 (as in Dyce₁ and Dyce₂) indicate first and second editions. Conjectures are marked 'conj', omissions, 'om.']

Act 1, Scene 1, 16 soldier] souldier (Q₁); souldiers (Q₂); Soldier (F₁).
21 Mar. (Q₁ Ff)] Hora. (Qq).

33 we two nights have] we haue two nights (Q₂), we two Nights haue (F₁).

43 it not (Q₁ Ff)] a not (Q₂); line om Q₃ Q₄ Q₅

45 Question it (Q₁ Ff)] Speake to it (Qq)

49 thee speak (F₃ F₄)] thee speake (Q₁ Q₂ F₁ F₂), thee, speak (Rowe).

51 thee speak] thee speake (Q₁ Qq), thee, speake (F₁)

61 he th' (Q₅)] he the (Q₁ Q₃ Q₄), hee the (Q₂), th' (Ff).

63 the sledded Polacks (Malone)] the sleaded pollax (Q₁ Q₂ Q₃), the sleaded Pollax (Q₄ Q₅), the sledded Pollax (F₁ F₂); the sledded Pollax (F₃); the sledded Poll-Ax (Q 1683), the sledded Poleaxe (F₄), the sledded Polack (Pope).

68 my (Q₁ Ff)] mine (Qq).

73 why (Q₁ Ff)] with (Qq).

73 cast (F₃ F₄)] cost (Q₁ Qq), Cast (F₁ F₂)

87 heraldry] heraldrie (Q₁), heraldy (Q₂); Heraldrie (Q₄ F₁), Heraldry (Q₃ Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)

88 those (Q₁ Ff)] these (Qq)

91 return'd (Ff)] retorne (Qq)

93 comart (Q₂)] Cou'nant (F₁)

94 article design'd] article desseigne (Q₂), articles desaigne (Q₃); Articles designe (Q₄ Q₅); Article desaigne (F₁), Article design'd (F₂ F₃ F₄).

98 lawless] lawlesse (Q₁ Q₃ Q₄ Q₅), lawelesse (Q₂); Landlesse (F₁).

103 compulsory (Qq)] Compulsatiue (F₁).

108-125 I think . . . countrymen] om. Ff.

112 mote (Q₄ Q₅)] moth (Q₂ Q₃).

117 As . . . blood] As starres with traines, of fier, and dewes of blood (Q₂), Stars shon with Trains of Fire, Dewes of Blood fell (Rowe). See note, p 135, above.

118 in (Qq)] veil'd (Rowe), dum'd (Capell).

121 fierce (Q₄ Q₅)] feare (Q₂); fearce (Q₃).

125 climature (Dyce₂)] Climatures (Qq).

127 *Spreads his arms*] *It spreads his armes* (Qq); *He spreads his arms* (Q 1676), om. Ff.

138 you (Q₁ Ff)] your (Qq).

- 140 at it (F₂ F₃ F₄)] it (Qq), at it (F₁).
 142 *Exit Ghost* (Ff)] om. Qq.
 160 The (Q₁ Ff)] This (Qq).
 161 dare stir] dare walke (Q₁); dare sturre (Q₃ Q₄); dare sturre (Q₄);
 dares sturre (Q₅), can walke (F₁).
 164 the (Ff)] that (Q₁ Qq)
 175 conveniently (F₂ F₃ F₄)] conueniently (Q₁ F₁), conuenient (Q₂).

Scene 2 (stage direction)] *Florish. Enter Claudius, King of Denmarke, Gertrude the Queene, Counsaile as Polonius, and his Sonne Laertes, Hamlet, Cum Alijs.* (Q₂), *Enter King, Queene, Hamlet, Leartes, Corambis, and the two Ambassadors, with Attendants.* (Q₁). The text follows F₁, except for *Voltemand* and *Cornelius*, who in the Folio, enter after l 25

- 11 an . . . a (Qq)] one . . . one (Ff).
 17 Now follows, that you know, young (Theobald)] Now follows [followes, (Q₅)] that you knowe [know (Q₃ Q₄)] young [yong (Q₅)] (Qq), Now followes, that you know young (F₁).
 34 *Voltemand*] *Valtemand* (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄); *Voltemand* (F₁ Q₅), *Volumand* (F₂ F₃ F₄).
 38 dilated (Ff)] delated (Qq)
 41 (stage direction)] om. Qq
 58 He hath (Q₁ Ff Q₃ Q₄ Q₅)] Hath (Q₂).
 58-60 wrung . . . consent] om. Ff.
 65 *aside* (Theobald)] om. Qq Ff.
 67 so (Ff)] so much (Qq).
 67 i' th' sun] in the sonne (Qq); i' th' Sun (F₁).
 77 good mother] could mother (Q₂); could smother (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅); good Mother (Ff).
 82 moods (Q₄ Q₅)] moodes (Q₂ Q₃), modes (Q 1683); Moods (Ff)
 82 shapes (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅)] chapes (Q₂), shewes (F₁)
 83 denote (Ff Q₅)] deuote (Q₂ Q₃); deuoute (Q₄).
 85 passeth (Ff)] passes (Qq)
 96 a mind (F₂ F₄)] or minde (Qq); a Minde (F₁); a Mind (F₂)
 114 retrograde (F₁ F₄ Q₅)] retrogard (Q₂ Q₃), retrograd (Q₄), retrogarde (F₂ F₃).
 129 solid (Ff)] sallied (Qq); sullied (Wilson, following George MacDonald's explanation of 'sallied'). Q₁ reads 'this too much grieu'd and sallied.'
 132 self-slaughter] scale slaughterⁿ (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), Selfe-slaughter (F₁); selfe-slaughter (Q₅).
 133 weary (Ff Q₅)] wary (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄).
 137 to this (Ff)] thus (Qq).
 143 would (Q₁ Ff)] should (Qq).
 149 even she] om. Qq.
 175 to 'drinke deep (F₂ F₄)] for to drinke (Qq); to drinke deepe (Q₁ F₁ F₂).

- 178 to see my (Q₁ Ff)] to my (Qq).
 185 O] om Qq
 186, 187 He . . . He] a . . . A(Qq), he . . . He (Q₁ Ff).
 187, 188 all in all | I] all in all | I (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), all in all, | I (Q₁ Q₃),
 all in all | I (Ff)
 198 wast (Q₁ Q₄ Q₅)] wast (Q₂ Q₃ F₁), waste (F₂ F₃ F₄)
 200 Armed . . cap-a-pe] Armed at poynt, exactly *Capapea* (Q₂),
 Armed at poynt, [point, (Q₄)] exactly *Cap apea* (Q₃ Q₄), Armed at point
 exactly, *Cap a pe* (Q₅), Arm'd at all points exactly, *Cap a Pe* (Ff)
 213 watch'd] watch (Q₂), watcht (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff), watched (Q₁)
 224 Indeed, indeed (Q₁ Ff)] Indeede (Q₂).
 225, 227, 228 *Both.* (Ff)] *All.* (Q₁ Qq)
 237 Very like, very like (Ff)] Yea very like, very like (Q₁); Very like
 (Q₂)
 249 whatsoever (Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)] what someuer (Q₂); whatsoever (Q₁
 Q₃ Q₄ F₁)
 254 *Exeunt*] After l 253 in Qq Ff.
 257 Foul] fonde (Q₂), foule (Q₁ Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ F₁ F₂), foul (F₃ F₄).

 Scene 3, 3 convoy is] conuay, in (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄); convey in (Q₅); Conuoy
 is (F₁)
 9 perfume and] om Ff.
 10 so ? (Rowe)] so (Qq Ff).
 12 bulk] bulkes (Qq), Bulke (F₁).
 18 For . . . birth] om. Qq
 21 safety (Q₃ Q₄)] safty (Q₂); safette (Q₄); sanetty (Ff), sanity
 (Theobald conj, Hanmer)
 26 particular act and place] particuler act and place (Q₂); peculiar
 Sect and force (Ff).
 49 like a (Ff)] a (Qq)
 51 (stage direction)] as in Ff, after 'rede' in Qq
 65 comrade] courage (Q₁ Qq); Comrade (Ff).
 68 thine (Ff)] thy (Qq).
 74 Are most select and generous, chief in that (Rowe)] Or [Ar (Q₂);
 Are (Q₄ Q₅)] of a most select and generous, chiefe [cheefe (Q₃)] in that
 (Qq); Are of a most select and generous cheff in that (Ff), Are of a most
 select and generall chiefe in that (Q₁).
 75 be (Ff)] boy (Qq)
 76 loan] loue (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄); love (Q₅); lone (F₁)
 77 dulls the (Q₅ F₃ F₄)] dulleth (Q₂); dulleth the (Q₃ Q₄), duls the
 (F₁ F₂)
 83 invites (F₂ F₃ F₄)] inuests (Q₂), inuites (F₁)
 109 Running (Collier conj, Dyce)] Wrong (Qq), Roaming (Ff),
 Wrongs (Pope), Wringing (Warburton conj; Theobald).
 115 springes (Q₄ Q₅)] Springes (Q₁ F₁ F₂); springs (Q₂ Q₃); Springs
 (F₃ F₄).

- 123 parley (Ff Qs)] parle (Q2 Qs Q4)
 125 tether (Ff)] tider (Q2), teder (Q2 Q4), tedder (Qs).
 129 implorators (Qs Q4 Qs Ff)] imploratorotors (Qs).
 130 bawds (Theobald conj, Pope2)] bonds (Qq Ff)
 131 beguile (Qs Q4 Qs Ff)] beguilde (Q2)

Scene 4, 2 a nipping (Ff)] nipping (Qq)

5 Indeed? I (Capell)] Indeede; I (Q2 Qs Q4), Indeed, I (Qs); Indeed I (Q1 Ff)

17-38 This . . . scandal.] om. Ff.

27 the (Pope)] their (Qq)

33 Their (Theobald conj, Pope2)] His (Qq).

36 e'il] eale (Qs); ease (Qs Q4 Qs).

37 often dout (Steevens 1793)] of a doubt (Qq).

49 anurn'd] interr'd (Q1 Q2), enurn'd (F1), Inurn'd (F2 F3 F4).

53 Revisits] Reuisites (Q2), Reuisits (F1); Revisitst (F2 F3), Revisit'st

(Q 1683 F4).

61, 78 waves (Qs)] waues (Q2 Qs Q4); wafts (Ff).

63 will I (Q1 Ff)] I will (Qq)

70 summit] somæet (Qq); Sonnet (Ff); Summit (Rowe).

75-78 The very beneath] om Ff.

82 arture] arture (Q2), artyre (Qs), atture (Q4), artery (Qs); Arture (F1 F2 F3), Atture (F4)

87 imagination (Q1 Q3 Q4 Qs Ff)] imagon (Q2).

Scene 5, 20 fretful (F4)] fretfull (Q1 F1 F2 F3), fearefull (Qq)

33 rots (Ff)] rootes (Q1 Q2 Q3); roots (Q4 Qs)

43 wit (Pope)] witte (Qq Ff).

47 what a (Ff Qs)] what (Q2 Qs Q4).

55 lust (F4)] but (Qq), Lust (Q1 F1 F2 F3).

56 sate (F1 F2)] sorr (Qq), seaf (F3 F4)

62 hebona] Hebona (Q1 Qq), Hehenon (Ff).

68 posset (Ff)] possesse (Qq)

77 unanel'd] vnaueld (Q2); vn-anueld (Qs Q4); un-anueld (Qs); vananel'd (F1), unananel'd (F2 F3 F4).

80 Ff Qq give this line to the Ghost. Rann and a few others assign it to Hamlet, following a conjecture recorded by Johnson and made independently by Paul Whitehead. Q1 gives 'O horrible, most horrible!' to the Ghost, but adds 'Ham. Q God!' ⁶

84 howsoever (F2 F3 F4)] howsomeuer (Q2), howsoeuer (Q1 F1).

84 pursuest (Ff Qs)] pursues (Q2 Qs Q4).

91 Exit (Ff)] om Qq.

93 Hold, hold, my (Capell)] ô fie, hold, hold my (Q2); O fie! hold, my (Qs); O fie! hold my (Q4 Qs); Oh fie! hold my (Ff).

95 stuffy (F3 F4)] swiftly (Qq); stuffily (F1 F2).

96 while (Ff)] whiles (Qq).

113 *Hor* (*within*)] *Qq* have *Enter Horatio, and Marcellus* after 'sworn't, omit *within*, and give 'My Lord, my Lord' to *Horatio*. *F₁* has (after 'sworn't') '*Hor & Mar within My Lord, my Lord. Enter Horatio and Marcellus*'

113 *Heaven* (*F₂ F₁ F₄*)] *Heavens* (*Q₂*), *Heauen* (*F₁*).

114 *Ham* (*Qq*)] *Mai* (*Ff*)

115 *Mar* (*Qq*)] *Hoi* (*Ff*)

116 *bird* (*Ff*)] and (*Qq*)

122 *my lord* (*Q₁*)] om *Qq*, *my Lord* (*Ff*)

123 *ne'er* (*F₂*)] *neuer* (*Q₂*), *nere* (*F₁*), *ne're* (*F₃ F₄*).

132 *Look you, I'll*] *I will* (*Qq*), *Looke you, Ile* (*F₁*).

150 *Aha*] *Ha, ha* (*Qq*); *Ah ha* (*F₁ F₂ F₃*), *Ah, ha* (*F₄*).

158, 159, 160] *So arranged in Ff* In *Qq* the order is 158, 160, 159.

167 *your* (*Q₁ Qq*)] *our* (*Ff*)

170 *soe'er*] *so mere* (*Q₂ Q₃ Q₄*); *so ere* (*Ff Q₂*).

179 *this not to do*] *this doe sweare* (*Q₂*); *this* [*This* (*Q₁*)] *not to doe* [*do* (*F₃ F₄*)] (*Q₁ Ff*)

181 *Swear*] om *Qq*, *sweare* (*Q₁*). *Sweare* (*F₁*).

ACT II, SCENE I (stage direction)] as in *Ff* *Qq* have *Enter old Polonius, [Polonius* (*Q₂*)] *with his man or two*.

28 *no* (*Ff*)] om *Qq*

38 *warrant* (*Ff*)] *wit* (*Qq*)

39 *sullies* (*Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ F₄*)] *sallies* (*Q₂*), *sulleyes* (*F₁ F₂ F₃*)

40 *i' th'* (*Ff*)] *with* (*Qq*)

52, 53 at 'friend . gentleman'] om *Qq*

55 *closes* (*Qq*)] *closes with you* (*Ff*).

58 *there o'ertook*] *there, or took* (*Qq*), *there o'retook* (*F₁*)

63 *takes* (*Ff Q₅*)] *take* (*Q₂ Q₁ Q₃*)

74 *Qq Ff* put *Reynaldo's* exit after l 73 and *Ophelia's* entrance before 'Farewell'

91 *he would* (*Ff*)] *a would* (*Qq*)

99 *help* (*F₃ F₄*)] *helps* (*Q₂*), *helps* (*Q₁ F₁ F₂*)

105 *passion* (*Ff*)] *passions* (*Qq*)

112 *quoted* (*Ff*)] *coted* (*Q₂ Q₁ Q₃*), *coated* (*Q₅*)

SCENE 2 (stage direction)] *Florish Enter King and Queene, Rosencraus and Guildensterne* (*Q₁*), *Enter King, Queene, Rosincrance, and Guildensterne* *Cum alijs* (*F₁*)

1 *Rosencrantz*] *Rosencraus* (*Qq*), *Rosincrance* (*F₁*); *Rosincros* (*F₂*), *Rosincross* (*F₃ F₄*)

5 *I call* (*Ff Q₅*)] *call* (*Q₂ Q₃ Q₄*).

12 *since* (*Ff*)] *sith* (*Qq*)

12 *haviour* (*Q₅*)] *hauior* (*Q₂*); *haur* (*Q₃*); *hauour* (*Q₁*), *humour* (*F₁*).

- 17 Whether thus] om. Ff
 20 are (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] is (Q₂)
 43 Assure you (Ff)] I assure (Qq)
 45 and (Qq)] one (Ff).
 57 our o'erhasty] our haste (Q₂), our o're-hasty (F₁).
 58 (stage direction)] *Enter Embassadors* (Qq after l. 57), *Enter Polonius, Voltmand, and Cornelius* (F₁ after l. 57)
 73 three (Ff)] threescore (Qq)
 76 (stage direction)] om. Qq Ff, supplied by Malone.
 90 since (Ff)] om Qq
 97 he is (Ff)] hee's (Q₂)
 110, 111 Qq make 'that's . . . heare thus' a part of the letter. F₁ prints 'but you shall heare these in her excellent white bosome, these' as if it were all a part of Polonius's remarks Corrected in Q 1683.
 126 above (F₂ F₃ F₄)] about (Qq), aboue (F₁).
 137 winking (Ff Q₅)] working (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄).
 143 his (Q₂ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] her (Q₂)
 146 repulsed, a (F₂ F₃ F₄)] rep^{ell}'d, a (Q₂ Q₃); repeld a (Q₃); repel'd, a (Q₄), repulsed A (F₁).
 148 watch (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅)] wath (Q₂); Watch (Ff).
 149 a (Ff Q₅)] om Q₂ Q₃ Q₄
 151 'tis this (F₁ F₃ F₄ Q₅)] this (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), tis this (F₂).
 156 (stage direction)] *Pointing to his head and shoulder* (Pope₂, Theobald)
 167 *reading on a book*] om Qq
 170 (stage direction)] *Exit King and Queene* (Q₂ after l 169), *Exit King & Queen* (F₁ after 'presently,' l 170).
 182 god] good (Qq Ff); God (Warburton).
 186 but not as . . . to't] But as your daughter may conceaue, friend looke to't (Q₂), but not as your daughter may conceiue Friend looke too't (F₁)
 188, 189 He . . . He] a . . . a (Qq), he . . . he (Ff)
 189 far gone, far gone (F₃ F₄)] farre gone (Q₂), farre gone, farre gone (F₁ F₂).
 203 you yourself] your selfe (Qq); you your selfe (F₁).
 206 should be old (Ff)] shall growe old (Q₂).
 210 grave?] graue. (Q₂), Graue (F₁).
 211 that is out o' th' (F₁)] that's out of the (Qq).
 213 sanity] sanctity (Q₂), Sanctie (F₁).
 214 and suddenly . . . him] om Qq.
 217 honourable] om Qq
 218 most humbly] om. Qq.
 219 sir] om Qq
 220 more (Ff)] not more (Qq)
 229 excellent (Ff Q₄ Q₅)] extant (Q₂); exelent (Q₃).
 230 ye (F₁ F₃ F₄)] you (Qq); yee (F₂).

232 over-happy . . . cap we] euer happy on Fortunes lap, We (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), ever happy on fortunes cap, We (Q₅); ouer-happy: on Fortunes Cap, we (F₁).

241 but that (Ff)] but (Qq)

243-276 Let me attended] om Qq

280 even (Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)] euer (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄); euen (F₂).

284 Come (Ff)] come, come (Qq).

298 could charge (Ff)] can charge (Q₂ Q₃ Q₅); can change (Q₄).

312 no other thing to me than] nothing to me but (Q₂), no other thing to mee, [me, (F₂ F₃ F₄)] then [than (F₄)] (Ff).

313 a peece (Ff Q₅)] peece (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄).

313 a man (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ Ff)] man (Q₅).

313 ff. how noble . . . a god!] how noble in reason, how infinit in faculties, in forme and mouing, how expresse and admirable in action, how like an Angell in apprehension, how like a God: (Q₂); how Noble in Reason? how infinite in faculty? in forme and mouing how expresse and admirable in action, how like an Angel? in apprehension, how like a God? (F₁). Q₃ Q₄ divide the clauses as in Q₂; but Q₅ accords with F₁

318 no, nor woman] nor women (Q₂); nor woman (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅); no, nor Woman (Ff).

326 you (Ff)] yee (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄); ye (Q₅).

333 of me (F₂ F₃ F₄)] on me (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄); of mee (F₁ Q₅).

337, 338 the clown . . . sere] om. Qq

338 tickle o' th' sere] tickled a' th' sere (F₁). 'Tickle' is Staunton's conjecture.

339 blank (F₃ F₄)] black (Q₂); blanke (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ F₁ F₂).

352-377 *Ham.* How comes . . . load too] om. Qq.

356 berattle] be-ratled (F₁); be ratle (F₂), be-rattle (F₃ F₄).

364 most like (Pope)] like most (Ff)

379 mows] mouths (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄); mouthes (Q₅); mowes (Ff).

385 (stage direction) as in Ff] *A Norwich.* (Q₂).

388 come (Ff)] come then (Qq).

389 lest my (Ff Q₅)] let me (Q₂); let my (Q₃ Q₄).

406 so (Q₁ Ff)] then (Qq).

416, 417 tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral] om. Qq.

419 light. For . . . liberty, these] light for . . . liberty. these (Q₂ Q₄), light for . . . libertie: these (Q₄); light for . . . liberty, these (Q₅); light, for . . . Liberty [liberty (F₄)]. These (Ff); light. For . . . Liberty, these (Theobald).

424 What (S Walker conj.; Dyce)] What a (Q₁ Qq Ff)

441 my old (F₂ F₃ F₄)] old (Qq); my olde (F₁).

444 By'r Lady] by lady (Q₂ Q₅); my Ladie (Q₄); my Lady (Q₅), Byrlady (F₁), Berlady (F₂ F₃ F₄).

448 French (Q₁ F₁)] friendly (Qq).

465 indict (Collier)] indite (Qq Ff).

466 affection (Ff)] affection (Qq).

- 467, 468 as wholesome . . . fine] om Ff.
 468 One] one (Qq), One cheefe (F₁)
 469 tale (Q₁)] talke (Qq); Tale (Ff)
 469 where (Q₁ Ff)] when (Qq).
 476 the (Ff)] th' (Qq)
 478 heraldry] heraldy (Q₂ Q₃); Heraldry (Q₄), Heraldry (Q₄ Ff Q₆).
 496 Then senseless Ilium] om Qq
 501 reverend] reuerent (Q₂), Reuerend (F₁)
 503 And, like] Like (Qq), And like (F₁ F₄), And lik'd (F₂ F₃).
 510 Aroused (Collier)] A rowssed (Qq F₂ F₃ F₄), A rowssed (F₁).
 525 O who (Q₁ Ff)] a woe (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), ah woe (Q₅).
 527 Mobled . . good (F₂ F₃ F₄)] om. Qq, Inobled . . good (F₁)
 537 husband's] husband (Q₂), husbands (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ F₂), Husbands (F₃ F₄).
 542 whe'r (Capell)] where (Qq Ff); whe're (Theobald).
 544 of this (Qq)] om Ff.
 553 bodykins (F₁)] bodkin (Qq).
 554 who should scape (Q₁ Ff)] who shall scape (Qq).
 560 (stage direction)] *Exit Polonius with all the Players but the First.*
 (Dyce) Q₂ puts *Exeunt Pol and Players.* after 'Elsinore' (l. 572); F₁ has
Exit Polon after 'sirs' (l. 559).
 565 for a (Ff)] for (Qq).
 566 dozen (F₁ F₄)] dosen lines (Qq), dosen (F₁ F₂).
 575 God b' wi' ye] God, buy to you (Qq), God [or god] buy'ye (F₁ F₂ F₄); god b' w' ye (F₄)
 575 (stage direction) Clark and Wright] *Exeunt* (Q₃ after l. 574),
Exit. (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ after l. 574); *Exeunt. Manet Hamlet.* (F₁ after l. 574).
 580 his (Ff)] the (Qq).
 580 wann'd] wand (Qq), warm'd (Ff)
 581 in's (F₁ F₃ F₄ Q₁)] in his (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄); ins (F₂)
 585 to Hecuba] to her (Qq); to *Hecuba* (Ff).
 587 the cue] that (Qq), the Cue (Ff).
 606 have (F₂ F₃ F₄ Q₅)] a (Q₁ Q₂); haue (Q₃ Q₄ F₁).
 609 O vengeance] om Qq
 611 a dear father murther'd (Capell)] a deere murthered (Q₂), a
 deere [deare (Q₅)] father murthered (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅); the Deere [dear (F₃ F₄)]
 murthered (Ff)
 615 A scullion! a stallyon, (Q₂); a scalion, (Q₁); a stallion, (Q₃);
 stallion, (Q₄ Q₅), A Scullion? (Ff).
 616 brain] braine (Q₁); braines (Qq), Braine (F₁).
 625 he but (Ff)] a doe (Q₂).
 627 a devil . . the devil] a deale . . the deale (Q₂); a diuell . . the
 diuell (Q₃ Q₄); a diuell . . the diuell (Q₅); the Diuell . . the Duell (F₁).

- Acr III, Scene I, 1 circumstance (Ft)] conference (Qq).
 6 he will (Ff Qs)] a will (Qs Qs Qs).
 27 on to] into (Qq), on To (Ff).
 28 too (Ff)] two (Qq).
 32 (lawful espials)] om Qq.
 33 Will (Ff)] Wee'le (Qs).
 46 loneliness (F4)] lowlines (Qs); lowliness (Qs Qs), loneliness (F2 F2 F3 Qs).
 55 Let's] om Qq
 55 *Exeunt*] om Qq
 55 Enter *Hamlet*] Enter *Hamlet* (Qq after 'burthen', Ff after *Exeunt*)
 72 despiz'd love, the] despiz'd loue, the (Qs); office, and the (Qs),
 office and the (Qs), despised love, and the (Qs), dispriz'd Loue, the (F1).
 76 these] om. Qq
 83 of us all (F2 F3 F4)] om Qs, of vs all (Q1 F1).
 86 pith (Ff)] pitch (Qq)
 92 well, well, well (Ff)] well (Qq)
 97 you know (Qq)] I know (Ff) 3
 99 the (Ff)] these (Qq).
 107 your honesty should (F4)] you should (Qq); your Honesty should (F1 F2 F3).
 119 inoculate] euocuat (Qs), euacuat (Qs), euacuate (Q4); evacuate (Qs); innoculate (F1), innoculate (F2 F3); inocualte (F4)
 122 to a (Ff)] a (Qq)
 133 all (Q1 Ff)] om Qq.
 141 Go] om Qq.
 147 O] om Qq.
 148 paintings too (Q1)] paintings (Qq); pratings too (F2); prating too (F2 F3 F4)
 150 You jig, you] you gig & (Qs Qs); you gig and (Qs); gig and (Qs); you gids, you (Ff), you jig and (Q1 1676).
 150 you hisp; you] you list you (Qq), you hispe, [lisp, (F4)] and (Ff).
 151 your ignorance (F2 F3 F4)] ignorance (Qq); your Ignorance (F1).
 153 no moe marriages (Qs)] no mo marriage (Qs Qs Qs); no more Marriages (Ff), no more marriages (Qs).
 159 The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's] So arranged by Hanmer. In Qq Ff the order is 'The Courtiers, souldiers, schollers' (Qs). Q1 reads 'The Courtier, Scholler, Souldier, all in him, All dasht and splinterd thence'
 160 expectancy (F2 F4)] expectation (Qq), expectansie (F1 F2).
 164 music] musickt (Qs Qs), Musicke (F1 F2 Q4); Musick (Q4 F3 F4).
 165 that (Ff)] what (Qq).
 166 jangled, out of tune and] iangled [jangled (Qs)] out of tune, and (Qq), iangled [jangled (F2 F4)] out of tune, and (Ff); jangl'd, out of tune and (Capell).
 167 feature (F2 F3 F4)] stature (Qq); Feature (F1).
 169 Here Qq mark *Exit*; om Ff.

181 something-settled (Warburton)] something settled (Qq Ff).
 196 unwatch'd (F₂ F₃ F₄)] vnmatcht (Q₂), vnwatch'd (F₁).

Scene 2, 3 our (Qq)] your (Q₁ Ff).

21 so overdone] so oie-doone (Q₂), so ouer-done (F₁).

24 her own feature] her feature (Qq), her owne Feature (F₁).

26 it make (Ff)] it makes (Qq)

32 the which one (F₂ F₃ F₄)] which one (Qq); the which One (F₁).

35 praise (Ff Q₂)] prayds (Q₂ Q₃), praisd (Q₄).

36 the accent (Ff Q₂)] th' accent (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄)

37 nor man (Qq)] or Norman (Ff), Nor Turke (Q₁).

41 sir] om Qq.

50 *Exeunt Players*] om. Qq.

50 Entrance as in Ff, Qq put it after 'work.'

53 *Exit Polonius* (Ff)] om. Qq.

56 *Both* We will . . . *they two*] *Ros.* I my Lord. [Lord (Q₂)] *Exeunt*
they [*those* (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅)] *two* (Qq); *Both.* We will [will, (F₂ F₄)] my
 Lord. *Exeunt* (Ff).

69, 70 distinguish, her election Hath (Ff)] distinguish her election,
 [election (Q₃ Q₄)] S'hath [Shath (Q₃ Q₄), Sh'ath (Q₅)] (Qq).

74 commingled (Dyce)] comedled (Qq); co-mingled (Ff)

93 he (Ff)] a (Qq)

94 detecting (Ff)] detected (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), detection (Q₅)

94 (stage direction)] *Enter Trumpets and Kettle Drummes, King, Queene, Polonius, Ophelia.* (Q₂); *Enter King, Queene, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosincrance, Guildenstjerne, and other Lords attendant, with his Guard carrying Torches Danish March Sound a Flourish.* (F₁).

121, 122 *Ham.* I mean . . . *Oph.* Ay, my lord] om. Qq.

140, 141 he . . . he (Ff)] a . . . a (Qq).

145 (stage direction) as in Ff] *The Trumpets sounds* [sound (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅)]. *Dumbe show follows* (Qq).

145 (dumb show)] *Enter a King and a Queene, the Queene embracing him, and he her, he takes her vp, and declines his head vpon her necke, he lyes him downe vpon a bancke of flowers, she seeing him asleepe, leaues him: anon come in an other man, takes off his crowne, kisses it, pours poyson in the sleepers eares, and leaues him the Queene returnes, finds the King dead, makes passionate action, the poysoner with some three or foure comes in againe, seeme to condole with her, the dead body is carried away, the poysoner wooes the Queene with gifts, shee seemes harsh awhile, but in the end accepts loue.* (Q₂), *Enter a King and Queene, very loungly; the Queene embracing him. She kneeles, and makes shew of Protestation vnto him. He takes her vp, and declines his head vpon her neck. Layes him downe vpon a Banke of Flowers. She seeing him a-sleepe, leaves him. Anon comes in a Fellow, takes off his Crowne, kisses it, and powres poyson in the Kings eares, and Exits. The Queene returnes, finds the King dead, and makes passionate Action. The Poysoner, with some two or three Mutes*

comes in againe, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poysoner Wooes the Queene with Gifts, she seemes loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end, acceptis his loue. *Exeunt* (F₁).

147 this is (Ff)] This is (Q₁); this (Q₂); tis (Q₃), it is (Q₄ Q₅).

147 miching malhecho] myching Mallico (Q₁); munching Mallico (Qq); Miching Malicho (Ff).

151 Enter Prologue] After 'fellow' (Q₂), after l. 158 (Ff).

152 counsel (F₁)] om. Qq, counsell (Q₁ F₁ F₂ F₃).

153 he (Pope)] a (Qq); they (Ff).

154 you'll (F₂ F₃ F₄)] you will (Qq), you'l (F₁).

166 Tellus' orb'd ground] *Tellus* orb'd the ground (Qq); *Tellus* Orbed ground (Ff).

174 your former (Q₂ Q₄ Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)] our former (Q₂); your forme (F₁).

176 After this line Qq have 'For women feare too much, euen as they loue, [even . . . love, (Q₅)]' om. Ff.

177 For . . . holds (Ff)] And . . . hold (Qq).

178 In neither (Ff)] Eyther [Either (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅)] none, in neither (Qq)

179 loue (Q₅ F₂ F₄)] Lord (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄, loue (F₁); Love (F₂).

181, 182 Where . . . grows there] om Ff

191 Wormwood, wormwood!] O wormewood, wormewood! (Q₁); That's wormwood (Qq); Wormwood, Wormwood. (F₁).

200 like (Ff)] the (Qq).

209 joys (F₄)] ioy (Q₂); ioyes (F₁); joyes (F₁ F₂).

228, 229 To . . . scope] om Ff

229 cheer] cheere (Qq; Wilson); chair (Steevens conj.).

233 If . . . wife] If once a widdow, euer I be wife (Q₁); If once a Widdow, euer I be Wife (F₁), If once I be [bee (Q₃)] a widdow, [widow, (Q₅)] euer [ever (Q₅)] I be a wife [be wife (Q₂)] (Qq).

237 *He sleeps*] om Qq; *Sleepes* (F₁).

238 *Exit* (Ff)] *Exeunt* (Qq).

250 o' that (Ff)] A that (Q₁); of that (Qq).

253 (stage direction)] Here in Ff, after l. 254 in Qq.

260 my (Ff)] mine (Qq)

262 must take your husbands (Pope)] must take your husband (Q₁; White); mistake your husbands (Qq), mistake Husbands (F₁); mis-take husbands (Capell)

263 Pox (Ff)] a poxe (Q₁), om. Qq.

267 Confederate (Q₁ Ff)] Considerat (Q₂ Q₃); Considerate (Q₄ Q₅).

269 infected (Q₁ Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] inuected (Q₂).

271 (stage direction)] om Qq

271 usurp] vsurps (Q₁ Q₂), vsurpe (F₁).

272 He (Q₁ Ff)] A (Qq)

272 for's (F₁ F₂ F₃)] for his (Q₁ Qq), fors (F₂).

277 *Ham* What, . . . fire?]
.. fires? (Q₁); om Qq.

281 *All*. (Ff)] *Pol*. (Qq).

- 287 two (Ff)] om Qq
 289 sir] om Qq.
 315 rather (Ff)] om Qq
 319 far (F₄)] om Qq, farre (F₁ F₂ F₃)
 321 start . . . from (Ff)] stare . . . from (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), stare . . . upon (Q₅).
 330 of my (Ff)] of (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), of the (Q₅)
 332 *Gul*] *Guld* (Ff), *Ros.* (Qq).
 359 (stage direction)] *Enter the Players with Recorders.* (Qq after 'Denmark,' l. 357), *Enter one with a Recorder.* (Ff after 'mausty,' l. 359)
 373 fingers and thumbs] fingers, & the ymber (Q₂), fingers, and the thumb (Q₃); fingers, & the thumb (Q₄); fingers and the thumbe (Q₅), finger and thumbe [thumb (F₄)] (Ff)
 382 to the top of my (Ff)] to my (Qq).
 388 can fret me (Ff Q₅)] can fret me (Q₁), fret me not (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄)
 389 (stage direction)] as in Capell; after 'sir' (l. 390) in Qq Ff
 395 'tis like (Q₅)] 'tis, like (Q₂); tis like (Q₁ Q₄), it's like (F₁).
 397 back'd (Ff)] back't (Q₁), backt (Q₂), black (Q₃ Q₄); blacke (Q₅)
 400-417 Qq give all these lines to Hamlet (Q₂ Q₃ by a catchword, Q₄ Q₅ by a speech heading). They put 'Leave me, friends' before 'I will say so' They omit *Exit* after 'say so.' The Ff give the right adjustment
 400 will I (Ff)] I will (Qq)
 404 I will say so (Ff)] I will, say so. (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄ Q₅)
 405 (stage direction)] as in Clark and Wright; om. Qq Ff.
 407 breathes (Q₅ F₂ F₄)] breakes (Q₂ Q₄); breaks (Q₄), breaths (F₁ F₂)
 409 bitter . . . day] busines as the bitter day (Q₅), bitter businesse [business (F₃ F₄)] as the day (Ff Q₅).
 414 daggers (Q₅)] dagger (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), Daggers (Ff).
 *
 Scene 3, 6 near us] neer's (Q₁ Q₃ Q₄); neare us (Q₅), dangerous (Ff)
 7 lunacies] browes (Qq), Lunacies (Ff), Lunes (Theobald); brawls (Wilson); brave's (anon conj, Parrott and Craig)
 17 It is (Ff)] or 'tis (Qq)
 18 summit] somnet (Qq), Somnet (Ff), Summit (Rowe).
 22 ruu] raine (Qq); Ruue (Ff).
 23 with (Ff)] om Qq
 25 upon (F₂ F₃ F₄)] about (Qq); vpon (F₁).
 26 *Both.* (Ff)] *Ros.* (Qq)
 35 (stage direction) (Capell)] *Exit* (Qq F₂ F₃ F₄ after 'know'), om F₁.
 50 pardon'd (Ff)] pardon (Qq).
 58 shove (F₂ F₃ F₄)] shoue (Q₂); shoue (F₁).
 72 *He kneels.*] om Qq Ff; *hee kneeles* (Q₁).
 73 it pat, now he is praying (Ff)] it, but [bot (Q₂)] now a is a praying [is praying (Q₅)] (Qq).
 74 he goes (Ff)] a goes (Q₂ Q₄ Q₅), goes (Q₃).
 75 reveng'd (F₂ F₃ Q₅)] reuendge (Q₂ Q₃); reuenged (Q₄); reueng'd (F₁); revenged (F₄).

79 hire and salary] base and silly (Qq), hyre and Sallery (F₁); bait and salary (Wilson), a benefit (Q₁)

80 He (Ff)] A (Qq)

81 flush (Qq)] fresh (Ff).

89 drunk asleep (F₁ F₂)] drunke, a sleepe [asleep (Q₁)] (Qq), drunke asleepe (F₁ F₂)

91 At gaming, swearing (Ff)] At game [game, (Q₁ Q₄ Q₆)] a swearing (Qq).

Scene 4, 1 He will (Ff)] A will (Qq)

4 silence (Qq Ff)] 'sconce (Hanmer). Q₁ reads 'T'le shrowde my selfe behinde the Arras'

5 with him] om. Qq

6 Ham . . mother] om. Qq

7 warrant (Ff Q₁)] wait (Q₂); waite (Q₃ Q₄).

8 Enter Hamlet] So placed in Ff; after 'round' in Qq.

20 inmost (Ff)] most (Qq)

22 Help, help (F₁ F₂)] Helpe (Qq)³; Helpe, helpe (F₁ F₂)

22 help, help, help (F₁ F₂)] helpe (Qq); helpe, helpe, helpe (F₁ F₂)

23 Makes Polonius] om. Qq, *Killes Polonius*. (F₁ after 'slain').

31 (stage direction) (Dyce)] om. Qq Ff

38 it is (Ff)] it be (Qq)

48 doth (Ff)] dooes (Q₂ Q₃), does (Q₄ Q₅)

48, 49 glow. Yea, this] glowe Ore this (Q₂), glow Ore this (Q₃ Q₄), glow, Yea this (Ff). glow Yea this (Q₅)

50 tristful (F₁)] heated (Qq), tristfull (F₁ F₂ F₃)

52 That . . index] Qq give the line to Hamlet. Corrected in Ff.

59 heaven-kissing (F₁ F₂ Q₁)] heaue, a kissing (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄); heauen kissing (F₁), Heaven kissing (F₁)

71-76 Sense difference] om. Ff

78-81 Eyes mope] om. Ff.

88 And . . panders] And . . pardons (Qq); As . . panders (Ff)

89 mine . . soul] my very eyes [eyes (Q₄)] into my soule (Qq), mine eyes into my very soule (F₁).

90 grained (Ff)] greeued (Q₁).

91 As their] As will leaue there their (Q₂), As will not leaue their (F₁).

95 mine (Ff Q₁)] my (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄).

97 tithes] kyth (Qq), tythe (Ff)

101 (stage direction)] Enter the ghost in his night gowne. (Q₁ before Save me'), Enter Ghost (Q₂ F₁ after 'No more'; Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ after pocket')

121 hairs] haire (Qq F₁ F₂); hair (F₁ F₄), Hairs (Rowe).

139 Ecstasy²] om. Qq

143 And I (Ff Q₁)] And (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄).

158 live (F₁ F₂ F₃)] leaue (Q₂); liue (F₁).

- 161-165 That . . . on] om Ff
 162 evil (Thiriby cony, Theobald)] deuill (Q₂ Q₃), Deuill (Q₄)
 diuill (Q₅).
 165 Refrain to-night] to refraine night (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), refraine to nigh
 (F₁), refrain to night (Q₅).
 167-170 the next . . . potency] om Ff
 169 And either master the (Jennens)] And either the (Q₂), Ana
 Maister the (Q₃), And master the (Q₄ Q₅), And exorcise the (Wilson cony)
 179 Thus (Ff Q₅)] This (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄).
 180 One lady] om Ff
 202-210 There's . . . meet] om Ff
 215 foolish (Q₁ F₁)] most foolish (Qq)
 217 (stage direction)] *Exit Hamlet with the dead body.* (Q₁), *Exit.*
 (Qq), *Exit Hamlet tugging in Polonius* (F₁)

Act iv, Scene 1 The Quarto of 1676 is the earliest text to begin a new
 Act here As stage direction Q₂ has *Enter King, and Queene, with Rosen*
cras and Guyldensterne. F₁ has *Enter King*

- 4 Bestow while] om Ff
 4 (stage direction)] om. Qq Ff, *Exeunt Ros and Guild* (Q 1676)
 27 He (Ff)] a (Qq)
 32 (stage direction)] after 'skill' (Qq), after 'excuse' (Ff).
 37 (stage direction)] om Qq, *Exit Gent* (Ff), *Ex Ros and Guild.*
 (Rowe)
 40 So haply slander (Capell)] om Qq Ff, For, haply, Slander (Theo-
 bald).
 41-44 Whose . . . air] om Ff

Scene 2, 2 *Gentlemen* . . . Lord Hamlet!] om. Qq

- 3 But soft] but soft (Q₂), but softly (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅), om. Ff.
 6 Compounded (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] Compound (Q₂)
 18 like an ape] like an apple (Qq), like an Ape (Ff); as an Ape doth
 nuttes (Q₁)
 31 Hide . . . after] om. Qq

Scene 3 (stage direction)] As in Ff, *Enter King, and two or three* (Q₂).

- 11 (stage direction)] *Enter Rosencraus and all the rest* (Q₂), *Enter*
Rosincraus (F₁); *Enter Rosincros* (F₂ F₃); *Enter Rosincros* (F₄)
 16 Guildenstern!] om Qq, *Guildensterne?* (F₁); *Guildenstar?* (F₂ F₃),
Guildenstare? (F₄).
 16 my (Ff)] the (Qq)
 16 (stage direction)] *They enter.* (Q₂ Q₃); *They Enter.* (Q₃ Q₄); *Enter*
Hamlet and Guildenstern (F₁)
 20 he is (Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] a is (Q₂ Q₃).

- 28-30 *King*. Alas . worm] om Ff
 38 indeed, if (Ff)] if indeed (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), indeed if (Q₅)
 40 (stage direction)] om Qq Ff, *to some Attendants* (Capell)
 41 He (Ff)] A (Qq)
 41 (stage direction) (Capell)] om Qq Ff
 45 With fiery quickness] om Qq
 54 and so (Ff Q₅) And so (Q₁), so (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄)
 59 (stage direction) (Theobald)] om Qq Ff
 66 congruing (Qq)] conjuring (F₁)
 70 were ne'er begun] will nere begin (Q₂); were ne're begun (Ff).

- Scene 4, 8 *Exeunt all but the Captain*] om Qq, *Exit* (Ff)
 8-66 *Enter Hamlet* . Ham Good . worth!] om Ff.
 8 (stage direction)] *Enter Hamlet, Rosencraus, &c* (Qq)
 17 speak (Qq); speak it (Pope), speak, sir (Capell)
 30 *Exit* (Dyce)] om Qq, *Exit Captain* (Capell)
 31 (stage direction)] *Exe. Manet Hamlet* (Rowe), om Qq.

- Scene 5 (stage direction)] *Enter Horatio, Gertrud, and a Gentleman*.
 (Qq), *Enter Queene and Horatio* (F₁)
 2, 4 *Gent*] *Gent* or *Gen.* (Qq), *Hor* (Ff).
 9 aim (F₂ F₄) yawne (Qq), ayme (F₁ F₂)
 16-20 'Let her come in' is given to Horatio in Qq In Ff 'Twere
 spilt' is all given to the Queen Corrected by Hanmer and Blackstone
 20 (stage direction)] *Enter Ophelia* after 'come in' (Qq), *Enter Ophelia*
distracted (F₁ after 'spilt') Before l. 23 Q₁ has *Enter Ofelia playing on a*
lute, and her haue downe singing.
 33 O, ho!] O ho (Qq); om. Ff.
 37 all with (Qq)] with (Q₁ Ff)
 38 grave (F₂ F₃ F₄)] ground (Qq), graue (F₁).
 38 not (Q₁ Qq Ff)] om Pope
 41 God (Ff)] good (Qq)
 57 la (Ff)] om Qq.
 64 He answers (Qq)] om Ff
 72 *Exit.* (Ff)] om Qq
 75 *Exit Horatio.* (Theobald)] om Qq Ff
 77 death (Ff)] death, [death. (Q₅)] and now behold, (Qq).
 82 their thoughts (Ff)] thoughts (Qq).
 89 Feeds on his (Johnson)] Feeds on this (Qq), Keepes [Keeps (F₂ F₄)]
 on his (Ff)
 96 *Queen* Alack . this?] om Qq
 97 Where are (Ff)] Attend, where is [are (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅)] (Qq).
 97 *Enter a Messenger*] Qq Ff put this stage direction immediately after
A noise within (l. 96)
 100 impetuous (Q₂ Q₄ Q₅ F₂ F₃ F₄)] impituous (Q₂); impituous (F₁).
 106 They (Ff Q₅)] The (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄).

- 108 *A noise within*] Qq put this stage direction after 'cry' (l. 109),
Ff put *Noise within*. after 'dogs' (l. 110)
111 (stage direction)] *Enter Laertes with others.* (Qq after 'dogs');
Enter Laertes. (F₁ after *Noise within*)
119 brows (Q 1676)] browe (Q₂ Q₃); brow (Ff Q₄ Q₅).
137 world (F₁)] worlds (Qq).
141 father's death] Father (Q₂), Fathers death (F₁).
142 swoopstake (Dyce)] soopstake (Q₂), Soop-stake (Ff). Q₁ reads
'Swoop-stake-like, draw at friend, and toe, and all?'
146 pelican] Pelican (Qq F₂ F₃ F₄); Politician (F₁).
151 pierce (Ff)] peare (Qq)
152, 153 eye. . . *Enter Ophelia*] eye *A noise within. Enter Ophelia.*
Laer. Let her come in How . . . that? (Q₂), eye *A noise within. Let*
her come in. Enter Ophelia Laer. How . . . that? (F₁).
156 by (Ff)] with (Qq).
160 old (Ff)] poore (Qq).
161-163 Nature . . . loves] om. Qq.
165 Hey . . . nony] om. Qq. •
167 Fare . . . dove] Part of the song in Qq Ff. Adjusted by Capell.
181, 182 O, you must] you must (Q₁); you may (Qq); Oh [O (F₄)]
you must (Ff)
185 he (Ff)] a (Qq)
188 affliction] afflictions (Q₁ Qq); Affliction (Ff).
190, 191 he (Ff)] a (Qq)
196 All (Q₁ Ff)] om. Qq
200 Christian (Ff Q₅)] Christians (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄).
200 I pray God] om. Qq
200 *Exit*] om. Qq •
- Scene 6 (stage direction)] *with an Attendant* (Ff), *and others* (Qq).
2 *Servant.* Sea-faring men, sir] *Genl.* (or *Gen.*) Sea-faring men sir (Qq),
Ser. Saylor's sir (F₁).
8 an't (Q₅ F₄)] and (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄); and't (F₁ F₂ F₃).
9 comes (Ff)] came (Qq).
24 good (Ff)] om. Qq.
28 bore (Ff)] bord (Qq).
31 He that (Ff)] So that (Qq).
32 give (F₂ F₃ F₄)] om. Q₂; make (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅); giue (F₁).
- Scene 7, 6 proceeded (Ff)] proceede (Q₂ Q₃); proceed (Q₄ Q₅).
7 crimfeul] criminall (Qq); crimefull (F₁)
8 Q₂ Q₃ insert 'greatnes' (Q₄ Q₅ 'greatnesse' after 'safetie.' Om. Ff
11 they are (Ff)] tha'r (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄); tha're (Q₅).
14 She's (F₁ F₂ F₄)] She is (Qq); Shes (F₂)
14 conjunctive (F₂ F₃ F₄)] concliue (Q₂); conunctiue (F₁).
20 Would (Ff)] Worke (Qq).

- 22 so loud a wind] so loued Arm'd (Q₂), so loued armes (Q₃ Q₄),
so loved armes (Q₅), so loud a Winde [Wind (F₂ F₄), wind (F₄)] (Ff).
24 And (Ff)] But (Qq)
24 had aim'd (F₃ F₄)] haue aym'd (Q₂), had arm'd (F₁); had
aym'd (F₂)
36 How . . . news?] om Qq
36 Letters . . . Hamlet] om Qq
37 This to (Ff)] These to (Qq).
41 Of him . . . them (Qq)] om. Ff.
42 (stage direction)] om Qq
47 your pardon (F₁ F₂ F₄)] you pardon (Qq F₄).
48 and more strange (Ff)] om Qq.
49 HAMLET (Ff)] om Qq.
54 advise (F₂ F₃ F₄)] deuise (Q₂), aduise (F₁).
57 shall live (F₂ F₃ F₄)] liue (Q₂); shall liue (F₁)
58 didest] didst (Qq), diddest (Ff)
63 As checking at (Ff)] As the King at (Q₂ Q₃), as liking not (Q₄ Q₅).
69-82 *Laer* My lord . . . graveness] om Ff.
89 topp'd my thought] topt me thought (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄); topt my thought
(Q₅), past my thought (Ff)
93 Lamound] *Lamord* (Qq), *Lamound* (Ff).
99 especially (Ff)] especiall (Qq)
101-103 The scrimers . . . them] om. Ff.
115-124 There . . . ulcer] om Ff.
123 spendthrift] spend thirfts (Q₂), spend-thrifts (Q₃ Q₄), spend-thrift
(Q₅)
126 your father's son in deed] indeede your fathers sonne (Q₂); your
Fathers [Father's (F₁ F₄)] sonne [son (F₃), Son*(F₄)] indeed [in deed
(F₄)] (Ff).
135 on (Ff)] ore (Qq)
139 pass (F₃ F₄)] pace (Qq), passe (F₁ F₂)
141 for that (Ff)] for (Q₂), for the (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅).
160 prepar'd (Ff)] prefard (Q₂), preferd (Q₃ Q₄); prefer'd (Q₅).
163 But . . . noise?] om Ff
164 How now, sweet queen?] om Qq
164 How now] how now (F₂ F₃ F₄), how (F₁).
168 aslant a (Ff)] ascant the (Qq)
169 hoar (F₃ F₄)] horry (Q₂); heary (Q₃); hoarie (Q₄ Q₅), hore (F₁ F₂)
170 There . . . come] Therewith [There with (Q₃ Q₄)] fantastique
[fantastick (Q₄); fantasticke (Q₅)] garlands did she make (Qq); There
with fantasticke Garlands did she come (F₁)
173 cold (Ff)] cull-cold (Q₃ Q₄); culcold (Q₄ Q₅)
174 coronet (Q₁)] cronet (Q₂), Coronet (Ff Q₄ Q₅)
179 tunes (Q₁ F₁)] laudes (Q₂ Q₃); lauds (Q₄ Q₅).
185 she is drown'd?] she is drownd. (Q₂); is she drownd *(Q₃), is she
drown'd. (Q₄), is she drown'd? (Ff Q₅).

192 speech of fire (Ff)] speech a fire (Q₂ Q₄); speecha fire (Q₂),
speech afire (Q₅)

193 douts (Knight)] drownes (Qq F₂), doubts (F₁), drowns (F₃ F₄)

ACT v, Scene 1 (stage direction) with . . . pickaxes] om Qq Ff; *with Spades and Mattocks* (Q 1676)

9 *se offendendo*] so offended (Qq), *Se offendendo* (Ff).

12, 13 and to perform; argal, she] to performe, or all, she [shee (Q₅)] (Qq). Corrected in Ff.

38-41 *Other*. Why . . . arms?] om Qq

49 that frame] that (Qq), that Frame (Ff)

62 (stage direction)] om Qq.

67 to Yaughan, fetch] in, and tetch (Q₂ Q₅), in and fetch (Q₃ Q₄); to Yaughan, fetch (Ff).

67 stoup (F₄)] soope (Qq), stoupe (F₁), stoape (F₂), stoap (F₃).

72 Q₂ Q₃ Q₅ put *Enter Hamlet and Horatio* after 'meet.'

74, 75 that he sings at (Ff)] a sings in (Qq)

81 intil] into (Qq), intill (Ff)

87 now o'erreaches] now ore-reaches (Qq), o're Offices (F₁).

91 good (Ff)] sweet (Qq)

93 he meant (Ff)] a went (Q₂), a ment (Q₃), a meant (Q₄ Q₅).

97 mazzard] massene (Q₂), mazer (Q₁ Q₃ Q₅), Mazard (F₁).

100 with 'em (Ff)] with them (Qq)

105 (stage direction) (Capell)] om Qq Ff. After l 104 Q₁ has *he throwes vp a shouel*

107 quiddits] quiddities (Qq), Quiddits (Ff)

107 quilletts (Q₁)] quillites (Q₂), quillities (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅); Quilletts (Ff).

108 rude (Ff)] madde (Q₂), mad (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅).

112, 113 Is this . . . recoveries] om Qq.

114 his vouchers] Qq om 'his'

115 double ones too (Ff)] doubles (Qq).

129 O (Ff)] or (Qq)

130 For . . . meet.] om Qq~

150 taken (Ff)] tooke (Q₂)

155 a (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] om Q₂

156 Of all the (Ff)] Of the (Qq).

161 the very (Ff)] that very (Qq).

177 thirty (Qq Ff)] twenty (Halliwell).

181 now-a-days] om. Qq

190, 191 This skull hath lien you] hath lyen you (Qq); this Scul, has lane (F₁).

191 three-and-twenty] 23. (Q₂ Q₃ Q₅); twenty three (Q₄); three & twenty (F₁); this dozen (Q₁), a dozen (Halliwell).

199 Yorick's] sir Yoricks (Q₂), Yoricks (F₁).

- 202 Let me see] om. Qq
 204 borne (F₁ F₂ F₃)] bore (Qq); born (F₄).
 214 chamber (Q₁)] table (Qq); Chamber (Ff).
 225 he (Ff)] a (Qq).
 231 as thus (Q₁ Ff)] om Qq
 232 into dust (Ff)] to dust (Qq)
 239 winter's] waters (Qq), winters (F₁).
 240 aside (Ff)] awhile (Q₂), a while (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅).
 240 (stage direction)] *Enter K Q Laertes and the corse.* (Q₂); *Enter King, Queene, Laertes, and a Coffin, with Lords attendant.* (F₁).
 245 (stage direction)] om Qq Ff, *retiring with* Horatio (Capell).
 249, 258 *Priest* (Ff)] *Doct* (Qq).
 252 have (F₂ F₃ F₄)] been (Q₂), haue (F₁).
 254 Shards (F₃ F₄)] om Qq, Shardes (F₁ F₂)
 255 crants] Crants (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), Rites (Ff), rites (Q₅).
 260 a requiem] a Requiem (Q₂), sage *Requiem* (Ff); such requiem (Dyce conj; Grant White), sad Requiem (Collier MS.).
 270 treble (F₃ F₄)] double (Qq), treble (F₁ F₂).
 273 (stage direction)] om. Qq
 281 *Leaps . . . Laertes*] om. Qq Ff. After 'Pelion' (l. 276) Q₁ has *Hamlet leaps in after Leartes*
 284 and rash (Ff Q₅)] rash (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄).
 286 wisdom] wisdom (Q₁ Qq), wisenesse (F₁).
 288 *All Gentlemen!*] om. Ff
 298 woo't fast] om Ff.
 299 esill] Esill (Qq), *Esile* (Ff), vessels (Q₂)
 300 thou come (Ff Q₅)] come (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄).
 307 *Queen*] *Quee* (Qq), *Kin.* (F₁), *King* (F₂ F₃ F₄).
 308 thus (Q₅ Ff)] this (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄)
 321 shortly (Ff)] thirtie (Q₂), thereby (Q 1605 Q₁ Q₄ Q₅).

 Scene 2, 5 Methought] my thought (Q₂), me thought (Ff Q₃ Q₄ Q₅).
 6 bilboes] bilbo (Q₂), bilbo's (Q₃ Q₄), Bilbo's (Q₅); Bilboes (Ff).
 9 pall (Q₂ F₄)] fall (Q 1605 Q₃ Q₅), fal (Q₄); paule (F₁ F₂ F₃); fail (Q 1695)
 17 unseal (F₃ F₄)] vnfold (Q₂), vnseale (F₁), unseale (F₂).
 19 O] A (Qq), Oh (Ff)
 22 hoo (Ff)] hoe (Qq).
 27 hear me how] heare now how (Qq), heare me how (F₁); heare how (F₂); hear how (F₃ F₄).
 29 villames (Capell)] villaines (Qq); Villaines (F₁); villainy (Theobald)
 40 might (Qq); should (Ff).
 43 such-like as's] such like, as sir (Qq); such like Assis (Ff).
 46 the bearers (Ff)] those bearers (Qq).
 52 Subscrib'd (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅ Ff)] Subscribe (Q₂).

- 57 Why employment] om Qq
 63 thinks't thee (Walker conj., Dyce)] think thee (Q₂ Q₃), think thee (Q₄), think you (Q₅); thinkst thee (F₁), think'st thee (F₂ F₃ F₄).
 68-80 To quit comes here²] om Qq
 73 interim is] *interim's* (F₁), *interim* is (Hammer)
 78 court (Rowe)] count (Ft)
 80 (stage direction)] *Enter a Courtier* (Qq after l 67); *Enter young Osrucke* (F₁), *Enter Osrucke* (F₂), *Enter Osruck* (F₃ F₄). Osruck's speeches in this scene are marked *Cour* in Qq, *O₁* in Ft
 83-86 (stage directions)] om. Qq Ff, indicated by Capell
 95, 96 Put your] your (Qq), put your (Ff).
 101 But yet (Qq)] om Ff.
 101 sultry] sully (Q₂), soultry (Ff Q₃ Q₄ Q₅)
 101 for my (Ff Q₃) or my (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄).
 104 But] but (Ff), om Qq.
 105 he has (F₂ F₃ F₄) a has (Qq); he ha's (F₁)
 109, 110 Nay . . faith] Nay good my Lord [Lord, (Q₅)] for my ease in good faith (Qq), Nay, [Nay (F₄)] in good faith, for mine ease in good faith (Ff).
 110-142 here is . . Well, sir] om Ff
 111 gentleman] gentlemen (Q₂), gentlemā (Q₃), Gentleman (Q₄ Q₅).
 114 feelingly (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅) sellingly (Q₂; Wilson), fellingly (Q 1605).
 118 dozy] dosie (Q₂), dazze (Q 1605), dizzie (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅).
 132 do't] too't (Q₂), dpo't (Q 1605 Q₃ Q₄); doe't (Q₅).
 143 is (Qq)] is at his weapon (Ff)
 144-150 I dare unfellowed] om Ff
 149 for his weapon (Q₃) for this weapon (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄).
 155, 156 he has impon'd] hee has impaund (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄); he has im-pawn'd (Q₅); he impon'd (Ft)
 156 hangers] hanger (Qq), Hangers (Ff)
 162, 163 *He* I done] om Ff
 166 cannon] a cannon (Q₂), Cannon (Ff).
 166 it might be (Q₁ Q₅ Ff)] it be (Q₃); it be might (Q 1605), it might bee (Q₄).
 169, 170 is this all . . it? why is this all you call it? (Qq); why [why, (F₁)] is this impon'd as you call it? (Ff)
 173 hath laid (Ff)] hath layd sir (Q₂).
 174, 175 hath nine] hee hath layd on twelue for nine (Q₂); He hath one twelue for mine (F₁)
 184 if I (Ff)] and I (Qq)
 186 redeliver you e'en so] deliuer you so (Q₂); redeliuer you e'en so (F₁).
 191 Yours, yours. He does] Yours doo's [does (Q₅)] (Qq), Yours, yours, hee does (F₁).
 194 He did comply with] A did sir with (Q₂); A did so sir with (Q 1605 Q₃ Q₄ Q₅); He did Complic with (F₁).

- 194 before he] before a (Qq), before hee (F₁)
 195 bevy (Caldecott)] breede (Q₂), Beauy (F₁)
 199 outward (Ff)] out of an (Qq)
 200 yesty (Ff)] histy (Q₂); misty (Q₂ Q₈), mistie (Q₄)
 201 fann'd and winnowed (Hanmer, Warburton)] prophane and
 trennowed (Q₂), prophane and trennowned (Q₈), profane and trennowned
 (Q₄ Q₈), fond and winnowed (Ff), profound and winnowed (Tschus-
 witz, Wilson)
 203-218 Enter a Lord . instructs me] om Ff
 219 this wayer] om Qq
 221 But thou] thou (Qq).
 225 gaingiving] gamgiuing (Q₂); game-giuing (Q₃ Q₄), game-giving
 (Q₈), gain-giuing (F₁)
 230 there's a (F₁)] there is (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄), there is a (Q₈).
 231 now] om Qq
 233, 234 it will come (Q₃ Q₄ Q₈ Ff)] it well come (Q₂).
 234, 235 all Since . Let be] all, since no man of ought he [hee
 (Q₂)] leaues, [leaves (Q₈)] knowes what ist [is't (Q₈)] to leaue [leave
 (Q₈)] betimes, let be [bec (Q₈)]. (Qq)]^a all, since no man ha's [has (F.
 F₄)] ought of what he leaues [leaves (F₂ F₃ F₄)] What is't to leaue
 [leave (F₂ F₃ F₄)] betimes? (Ff)
 235 (stage direction)] *A table prepar'd, Trumpets, Drums and officers
 with Cushion, King, Queene, and all the state, Foiles, daggers, and Laertes*
 (Q₂); *Enter King, Queene, Laertes and Lords, with other Attendants with*
Foyles, and Gauntlets, a Table and Flagons of Wine on it. (F₁).
 236 (stage direction)] substantially Johnson's; om Qq Ff.
 241 sore (Ff)] a sore (Qq)
 251 Sir, in this audience] om Qq
 255 brother (Q₁ Qq)] Mother (Ff).
 261 keep] om Qq.
 261 till (F₁)] all (Qq).
 265 Come on] om Qq
 274 better'd (Ff)] better (Qq).
 276 (stage direction)] om. Qq
 283 union (F₂)] Vnice (Q₂); Onixe (Q 1605 Q₈), Onix (Q₄); Onyx
 (Q₈), vnion (F₁), Union (F₃ F₄)
 289, 290 Qq have *Trumpets the while* in the margin; om. Ff
 291 *They play.* (Ff)] om Qq
 294 After 'palpable hit' Q₂ has *Drum, trumpets and shot. Florish, a
 peece goes off.* After 'cup' Ff have *Trumpets* [Trumpet (F₂ F₃ F₄)] *sound,*
and [om. F₂ F₃ F₄] *shot goes off*
 296 *They play.*] *They play againe* (Q₁ after l 292); om Qq Ff.
 297 A touch, a touch (Ff)] om Qq.
 297 confess't] confest (Qq), confesse (F₁)
 302 *Drinks*] om Qq Ff. Q₁ has *Shee drinkes*, after 'thy mother drinkes
 to thee'; cf l 300.

- 308 You but] you doe but (Qq), you but (Ff)
 310 afeard (F₃ F₄)] sure (Qq), affear'd (F₁), affeard (F₂)
 311 Play (Ff)] om Qq
 313 (stage direction)] om Qq, *In scuffling they change Rapiers* (Ff)
 After 'Ham Come on sir' (which follows 'my conscience,' l 307) Q₁ has
*They catch one anothers Rapiers, and both are wounded, Leartes falles
 downe, the Queene falles downe and dies.*
 319 sounds (Q₂ Q₁ Q₄ F₁ F₂)] swounes (Q₂), swounds (F₃ F₄).
 321 Dies] om Qq Ff, *Queen dies* (Rowe)
 323 *Laertes fall.* (Capell)] om. Qq Ft
 324 Qq omit the second 'Hamlet'
 326 hour of (F₃ F₄)] houres (Qq), heure of (F₁ F₂).
 327 thy (Ff Q₂)] my (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄).
 333 *Hurts the King* (Ff)] qm Qq
 336 incestuous (Ff Q₂)] incestious (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄).
 336 murd'rous] om Qq
 337 off (Ff Q₂)] of (Q₂ Q₃ Q₄)
 337 thy union] the Onixe [Onyx (Q₂)] (Qq), thy Vnion (F₁).
 338 (stage direction)] om Qq, *King Dyes* (F₁).
 342 Dies] om Qq, *Dyes* (F₁)
 355 good (Ff)] god (Q₂), God (Q₃ Q₄ Q₅)
 356 shall live (F₃ F₄ F₅)] shall I leaue (Q₂), shall liue (F₁).
 360 March . . shot within. (Steevens)] *A march a faire off.* (Qq);
March afaire off, and shout within (F₁)
 369 silence (Qq)] silēce O, o, o, o Dyes (F₁), silence O, o, o, o
Dies (F₂), silence O, o, o. *Dies* (F₁ F₄)
 371 *March within*] om Qq Ff. Supplied by Capell after 'hither.'
 372 (stage direction)] *Enter Voltemar and the Ambassadors from Eng-
 land, enter Fortenbrasse with his traine* (Q₁); *Enter Fortenbrasse, with the
 Embassadors* (Q₂); *Enter Fortinbras and English Ambassador, with
 Drumme, Colours, and Attendants.* (F₁)
 390 to th' yet (Q₃ Q₄ Ff)] to yet (Q₂), to'th yet (Q₃).
 394 forc'd cause (Ff)] for no cause (Qq)
 403 on (Ff)] no (Qq)
 409 royally (Ff)] royall (Qq)
 410 rites (Ff)] right (Qq).
 414 (stage direction)] as in F₁; *Exeunt.* (Q₂).

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- thrall, to enslave, iii, 4, 74
- thrift, economy, 1, 2, 180, prosperity, ii, 2, 67, 193
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 unbated, not blunted, *iv*, 7, 139, *v*, 2, 328
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 unreclaimed, untamed, *ii*, 1, 34
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 unshaped, incoherent, disconnected, *iv*, 5, 8
 unsifted, untried, *i*, 3, 102
 unskilful, indiscriminating, *iii*, 2, 31
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 up, into the sheath, *iii*, 3, 88
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 use, to practise, *iii*, 2, 50
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- vailed, downcast, *i*, 2, 70
 valanc'd, fringed, *ii*, 2, 442
 Valentine, true-love, *iv*, 5, 51
 validity, vigour, *ii*, 2, 199
 vantage, advantageous situation, *v*, 2, 401, (of), from a favourable position, *iii*, 3, 33
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 ventages, wind-holes, *iii*, 2, 372
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 wake, to sit up late, *i*, 4, 8
 wan, to grow pale, *ii*, 2, 580
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 want, to lack, *iv*, 5, 90
 wanton, gay, wild, *ii*, 1, 22
 wanton, a spoiled child, a plaything, *v*, 2, 310
 wantonness, affectation, *iii*, 1, 151
 warrant (of), warrantable, *ii*, 1, 38
 wash, waves, *ii*, 2, 166
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 way, access, *iv*, 6, 32
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 word, a motto, *i*, 5, 110
 worth, ability, *i*, 2, 18
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THE TRAGEDY OF
KING LEAR

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INTRODUCTION

KING LEAR was entered in the Stationers' Register on November 26, 1607: 'as yt was played before the Kinges maiestie at Whitehall vpon Sainct Stephens night [December 26] at Christmas Last.'¹ The First Quarto came out in 1608.² The Second Quarto (1619, misdated 1608) reprints the First. A Third Quarto appeared in 1655. The basis for the text is the First Folio (1623), which supplies about a hundred genuine lines that are lacking in the Quartos;³ but the First Quarto furnishes many good readings and supplies some three hundred lines which the Folio omits.⁴ The Fool's burlesque prophecy (iii, 2, 79-95) in the Folio (omitted in the Quartos) is commonly regarded as a spurious insertion. Apart from this passage there is nothing in either the Quartos or the Folio that seems un-Shakespearean. Indeed, the prophecy itself is not a bad piece of jester's lingo. Even the Fool's remark, 'This prophecy Merlin shall make, for I live before his time,' is so riotously comic that one is tempted to accept it as Shakespeare's own defiance of chronological possibility. One remembers Hotspur's ridicule of 'the dreamer Merlin and his prophecies' (*1 Henry IV*, iii, 1, 148 ff.). The subject was of real political significance in Shakespeare's time. An act against seditious

¹Arber, *Transcript*, III, 366

²M William Shak-speare. | *his* | True Chronicle Historie of the life and | death of King Lear and his three | Daughters. | *With the vnfortunate life of Edgar, sonne* | and heire to the Earle of Gloster, and his | sullen and assumed humor of | Tom of Bedlam | *As it was played before the Kings Maiestie at Whitehall vpon* | *S Stephens night in Christmas Hollidayes.* | By his Maiesties seruants playing vsually at the Gloabe | on the Bancke-side | London, | Printed for Nathaniel Butter, and are to be sold at his shop in *Pauls* | Church-yard at the signe of the Pide Bull neere | *St Austins Gate*, 1608.

³See Textual Notes.

⁴See i, 2, 157-165 ('as of . . . Come, come'), i, 4, 154-170 ('That lord . . . snatching'), 252-256, iii, 1, 7-15 ('tears . . . all'), 30-42 ('But . . . to you'), iii, 6, 18-59, 108-121; iii, 7, 99-107, iv, 2, 31-50 ('I fear . . . deep'), 53-59 ('that . . . so'), 62-69, iv, 3 (entire), iv, 7, 85-97; v, 1, 23-28 ('Where . . . nobly'), v, 3, 204-221 ('This . . . slave').

prophecies was debated in Queen Elizabeth's first parliament (1559) and passed in her second (1563).¹

Most of the omissions in the Folio are obviously mere 'cuts' to shorten the play for acting. This fact comes out clearly, for example, in the quarrel between Albany and Goneril in iv, 2, 29-68.² The Folio text, then, represents a stage version of KING LEAR, but there is no evidence that the cuts were made by the author himself. The differences between the Quarto and the Folio by no means warrant the theory that Shakespeare ever rewrote his KING LEAR or subjected it to a substantial revision.

As for the exact nature of the 'copy' which the printer of the Quarto or the printer of the Folio used, or for its relation, in each case, to the Globe prompt book, nothing short of revelation will ever enlighten us.³ Except for its omissions the Folio text is more nearly authoritative, but, even so, it is often wrong when the Quarto is right. In cases of doubt, where both Quarto and Folio 'make sense,' an editor must use his judgment.

For the date of KING LEAR all the evidence would fit either 1605 or 1606.⁴ One limit is fixed by the performance at court on December 26, 1606; the other by 'these late eclipses in the sun and moon' (i, 2, 112), which occurred in September and October, 1605.⁵ The situation and dialogue when the disguised Kent seeks service with the king (i, 4, 9-42) seem to be imitated by Edward Sharpham in his comedy *The Fleire* (sig. C3),

¹See Kittredge, *Witchcraft in Old and New England*, 1929, Chapter XIV. Cf. Sir Francis Palgrave, *Norfolk Archaeology*, I (1847), 209, 210; Rupert Taylor, *The Political Prophecy in England*, 1911; M. H. Dodds, *Modern Language Review*, XI (1916), 276-284.

²Here the Folio omits ll. 31-50 ('I fear . . . of the deep'), 53-59 ('that no know'st . . . does he so?'), 62-68 ('Thou changed . . . mew!').

³For theories, discussion, and references, see Sir E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare*, 1930, I, 464 ff., and Madeleine Doran, *The Text of King Lear*, 1931. Cf. *Times Literary Supplement*, March 31, 1932, p. 227.

⁴See R. A. Law, *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, XXI (1906), 462 ff.; Sir E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare*, 1930, I, 467-470.

⁵Cf. G. B. Harrison, *Times Literary Supplement*, November 30, 1933, p. 856.

where Sir Antifront, likewise disguised, talks in the same vein. *The Fleire* was not printed until 1607, but it was registered on May 13, 1606.¹ If *Macbeth* was written (as seems likely) in 1606, we may settle on 1605 for KING LEAR, since it came just before or just after *Macbeth*.

To Lear (Llyr, Ler), a divine but shadowy figure in the mythology of the ancient Britons, of whose children wild tales are told in Irish and Welsh, Geoffrey of Monmouth in his twelfth-century *Historia Regum Britanniae* (ii, 11-15) attached the old folk-tale of the three daughters. From Geoffrey the legend was taken over by Holinshed in his *Chronicle*, by Spenser in *The Faerie Queene* (ii, 10, 27-32), and by John Higgins (1574) in *A Mirrour for Magistrates*.² All these books were familiar to every Elizabethan who read anything. The tale had also been dramatized in *The True Chronicle History of King Lear*, printed in 1605. This was entered in the Stationers' Register on May 14, 1594 (Arber, II, 649), and performances are recorded by Henslowe in April of that year.³

Holinshed's narrative is, in substance, as follows:

Lear's reign over Britain began 'in the yeere of the world 3105' He 'was a prince of right noble demeanor, gouerning his land and subiects in great wealth.' He had three daughters—Gonorilla, Regan, and Cordeilla—'which daughters he greatly loued, but specially Cordeilla the yongest farre aboue the two elder.

'When this Lear therefore was come to great yeeres, & began to waxe vnweldie through age, he thought to vnderstand the affections of his daughters towards him, and preferre hir whome he best loued, to the succession ouer the kingdome. Whervpon he first asked Gonorilla the eldest, how well shee loued him who calling hir gods to record, protested, that she loued him more than hir owne life, which by right and reason shoulde be most deere vnto hir. With which answer the father being well pleased, turned to the second, and demanded of hir how well she loued him who answered (confirming hir saiens with great othes) that she

¹Arber, III, 321

²For a full account of the Lear saga in its many versions see Wilfrid Perrett, *The Story of King Lear from Geoffrey of Monmouth to Shakespeare*, Berlin, 1904 (*Palaestra*, XXXV).

³*Diary*, ed. Greg, II, 162. Cf. Sir E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, IV, 25, 26.

loued him more than tounge could expresse, and farre aboue all other creatures of the world.

Then called he his yongest daughter Cordeilla before him, and asked of hir what account she made of him vnto whome she made this answer as followeth: 'Knowing the great loue and fatherlie zeale that you haue always borne towards me, (for the which I maie not answere you otherwise than I thinke, and as my conscience leadeth me) I protest vnto you, that I haue loued you euer, and will continuallie (while I lue) loue you as my naturall father And if you would more vnderstand of the loue that I beare you, assestaine your selfe, that so much as you haue, so much you are worth, and so much I loue you, and no more.' The father being nothing content with this answer, married his two eldest daughters, the one vnto Hennisus, the Duke of Cornwal, and the other vnto Maglanus, the Duke of Albania, betwixt whome he willed and ordeined that his land should be deuided after his death, and the one halfe thereof immediatelie should be assigned to them in hand, but for the third daughter Cordeilla he reserued nothing.'

After this Aganippus, 'one of the princes of Gallia,' sent over to Britain to ask for the hand of Cordeilla, whom he married without dowry.

When Lear became very old, the Dukes of Cornwall and Albania deprived him of his half of the kingdom, assigning him merely a regular income for life. Thus too they diminished from time to time, with the hearty concurrence of their wives. Gonorilla and Regan, indeed, 'seemed to thinke that all was too much which their father had, the same being neuer so little: in so much; that going from one to the other, he was brought to that miserie, that scarslie they would allow him one seruauant to waite vpon him.'

At last Leir was forced to take refuge in Gallia, where he was kindly received by Cordeilla and her husband. Upon learning of the cruelty with which he had been treated, Aganippus raised an army and invaded Britain. The rebellious dukes were slain in battle and Leir was restored to the throne. It was agreed that Cordeilla should succeed him 'as the rightfull inheritour after his decesse, notwithstanding any former grant made to hir sisters or to their husbands.'

Leir ruled Britain for two more years and then died in peace. He was succeeded by Cordeilla, who reigned five years. In the meantime her husband died. 'About the end of those fiue yeeres' her two nephews, the sons of Gonorilla and Regan, 'disdaining to be vnder the gouernment of a woman, leued warre against hir, and destroyed a great part of the land, and finallie tooke hir prisoner, and laud hir fast in ward, wherewith she tooke suche grieffe, being a woman of a manlie courage, and despairing to recouer libertie, that she slue herself.'

In Holinshed, in Spenser, and in the *Mnour* the story is substantially identical. The catastrophe is quite different from that of Shakespeare's tragedy. Lear dies peacefully, two years

after his restoration. It is the life of Cordelia, not the life of Lear, that comes to a tragic end.

Shakespeare was dealing with a history which came to no proper dramatic conclusion—which had, in fact, two catastrophes (one happy and one tragic); and these were separated by an interval of seven years. He combined the two in a single tragic catastrophe: the insurrection against Cordelia on the part of her nephews is identified with the war waged by Cordelia against the two Dukes, and the unhappy outcome of the later struggle is ascribed to the earlier. Thus, instead of succeeding in her attempt to reinstate her father, Cordelia is defeated by Albany and Edmund, and, with the King, is taken prisoner. There is, however, an opportunity for a reconciliation between father and daughter. The death of Cordelia is a murder under the guise of an execution. She is hanged, and King Lear escapes by violent resistance. The strength of his earlier manhood returns for the moment. he kills the hangman and comes in with the body of Cordelia in his arms. But the physical and mental sufferings that he has endured are too much for his enfeebled frame and he dies peacefully, like the going out of a candle. Shakespeare, we note, has preserved all such incidents of the two catastrophes as in any way served his purpose or lent themselves to tragic unity. He has brought the play to the only end that is conceivable after the long agony which the King had suffered. It is Lear who is the central figure of the whole, and the drama properly ends with the death of the main personage.

The anonymous old play is, as its title indicates, a 'chronicle history,' not a tragedy. It ends happily with the triumph of Cordelia and Lear's restoration to the throne. Shakespeare owes little to the old play except the impulse to write a new one.¹ Now and then a phrase reminds us of something in *KING LEAR*, but these resemblances are trifling. Kent may be foreshadowed by Perillus, but the likeness is shadowy indeed. Perillus is an old man, his protests are very mild, and he is not

¹On the relation of Shakespeare's tragedy to the old play and to the legendary material see especially R. W. Chambers, *King Lear*, 1940.

banished; therefore he does not, like Kent, disguise himself to enter the service of his master. The Messenger whom Regan employs to murder her father may have given a hint for Oswald. The business of the letter (iv, 5) is rather like a scene between Goneril and the Messenger in the old play. In various matters Shakespeare abandons the novel devices of his predecessor as in i, 1, where the old play complicates the plot by bringing in a scheme of Cordelia's sisters to ensure her giving an unacceptable answer. To Spenser Shakespeare owes nothing except, perhaps, the form 'Cordelia' (for 'Cordeilla' or 'Cordella'). Two lines in Higgins's poem may have suggested Cordelia's remark (i, 1, 102 ff.) about love for some future husband (which is in none of the other sources):

Yet shortly I may chance, if Fortune will,
To find in heart to beare another more good will.

But this is a very natural reflection (cf. *Othello*, i, 3, 180 ff.). In Lear's intent to show his 'largest bounty' to the most deserving (i, 1, 53, 54), Shakespeare is close to Geoffrey ('ut sciat quae illarum maiore regni parte dignior esset') where Holinshed goes astray, and here too the *Mirror* coincides: 'He thought to guerdon most where fauour most he fand'. In the old play Lear means to divide his kingdom equally, and the test of affection is merely to 'resolue a doubt which much molests [his] mind.'

Gloucester and his two sons do not appear in the ancient legend. Their story Shakespeare adapted from the episode of the King of Paphlagonia in Sidney's *Arcadia* (ii, 10). This he has so dexterously interwoven with the legend that Edmund's villainy becomes the determining factor in the tragic catastrophe. Edgar's description of the fiend that led his father to the edge of Dover Cliff (iv, 6, 69 ff.) recalls Horatio's warning to Hamlet (i, 4, 69 ff.). For the resemblance of his mad talk to passages in Harsnet's account of cases of supposed demoniacal possession in *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* (1603) see the notes on iii, 4, 53-55, 94, 95, 120-122, 148-149.

Eminent critics have done their best to reconcile Cordelia's character with her refusal to compete with her sisters' lies by speaking the truth her father longs to hear. The inconsistency was of course obvious to Shakespeare, who has done everything possible to conceal it by introducing the vehement Kent as Cordelia's advocate and by letting France explain her offishness as

a tardiness in nature
Which often leaves the history unspoke
That it intends to do

But Cordelia finds no difficulty in expressing herself fluently, either in this scene or elsewhere. The inconsistency, however, is not chargeable to Shakespeare. It is the essential point in the ancient story and goes back to a time long anterior to any ideal of probability in narrative. If Shakespeare had changed the tale here, his tragedy would have come to a happy ending in the first act.

King Lear's Fool is clad in motley (particoloured attire) and wears the regular fool's cap crested with an imitation of a cock's comb. In real life the professional fool was usually a 'natural'—that is, in plain terms, an idiot or half-wit, or he might be, not idiotic, but crack-brained—a harmless paranoiac. Rarely was he, either in fact or in the drama, a clever fellow who, with all his wits about him, played the jester's part for a livelihood.¹ In the case of Lear's Fool it was insanity that had qualified him for his profession. Something had thrown his fine mind off its balance, but he retained no small part of his gifts of nature, and his genius flashes with that uncanny brilliance which often marks the intellect that has escaped from normal control. Thus he is qualified to be the chorus in a tragedy.

Lear's madness has no place in the old story; it is Shakespeare's own invention. Eminent alienists have diagnosed it as senile dementia. His mind was failing, they contend, at the

¹For details as to the Elizabethan fool see *As You Like It*, Introduction, pp. xiii-xvi.

beginning of the play To the Elizabethans, however, irascibility was not insanity Nothing can be clearer than that Shakespeare intended Lear's madness to be simply an attack of feverous delirium, brought on by exposure to the storm and superinduced by the terrible strain to which his emotions had been subjected. The physician actually cures him. Even the dreadful events that follow do not overthrow his restored reason, for, when he enters with the murdered Cordelia in his arms, he is not mad. At the moment of death when his powers fail utterly, so that he cannot recognize his nearest friends, it is not madness but dissolution.

The character of King Lear is all Shakespeare's. In the chronicle Lear has no character: he is merely the king in a fairy tale—a child's figure of royalty—the kind of monarch who always wears his crown and never lays aside his sceptre. In the old play he is hardly more than that. Indeed, he is rather less; for the feebleness which he displays after the opening scene is almost provocative of contempt. He is distinctly senile. He has all the futilities of old age with none of its dignity. But in Shakespeare Lear becomes colossal His character defies analysis because it needs none. He is a man; he is a father; he is a king—and he is old. That is the whole account. He must have love; but he requires obedience too, and veneration, as befits the kingly office. Always and everywhere he must be king. He has reigned too long and too well to be able to give up reigning. He tries to resign his kingdom, but he cannot, even in his madness 'Prithee, nuncle, tell me,' asks the Fool, 'whether a madman be a gentleman or a yeoman.' And Lear's reply is inevitable: 'A king! a king!'

THE TRAGEDY OF
KING LEAR

[Dramatis Personæ.

Lear, King of Britain.

King of France.

Duke of Burgundy

Duke of Cornwall.

Duke of Albany

Earl of Kent.

Earl of Gloucester.

Edgar, son to *Gloucester*

Edmund, bastard son to *Gloucester*.

Curan, a courtier.

Old Man, tenant to *Gloucester*.

Doctor.

Lear's Fool.

Oswald, Steward to *Goneril*.

A Captain under *Edmund's* command

Gentlemen.

A Herald.

Servants to *Cornwall*.

Goneril,
Regan,
Cordelia, } daughters to *Lear*.

Knights attending on *Lear*, Officers, Messengers, Soldiers, Attendants.

SCENE.—*Britain*.]

THE TRAGEDY OF KING LEAR

ACT I. Scene I [King Lear's Palace]

Enter *Kent*, *Gloucester*, and *Edmund*. [*Kent* and *Gloucester* converse. *Edmund* stands back.]

Kent. I thought the King had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.

Glou. It did always seem so to us, but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the Dukes he values most, for equalities are so weigh'd that curiosity in neither can make choice of either's moiety. 7

Kent. Is not this your son, my lord?

Glou. His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge. I have so often blush'd to acknowledge him that now I am braz'd to't.

Kent. I cannot conceive you. 12

Glou. Sir, this young fellow's mother could; whereupon she grew round-womb'd, and had indeed, sir, a son for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?

Kent. I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.

Glou. But I have, sir, a son by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account. Though this knave came something saucily into the world before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair, there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged.—Do you know this noble gentleman, *Edmund*? 25

Edm. [*comes forward*] No, my lord.

Glou. My Lord of Kent. Remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

Edm. My services to your lordship.

Kent. I must love you, and sue to know you better. 31

Edm. Sir, I shall study deserving.

Glou. He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again.
Sound a sennet.

The King is coming.

Enter *one bearing a coronet*; then *Lear*; then the *Dukes of Albany and Cornwall*; next, *Goneril, Regan, Cordelia*, with *Followers*.

Lear. Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Gloucester.

Glou. I shall, my liege. 36

Exeunt [Gloucester and Edmund].

Lear. Meantime we shall express our darker purpose.

Give me the map there. Know we have divided
In three our kingdom; and 'tis our fast intent
To shake all cares and business from our age, 40
Conferring them on younger strengths while we
Unburthen'd crawl toward death Our son of Cornwall,
And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife 45
May be prevented now. The princes, France and Burgundy,
Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,
Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,
And here are to be answer'd. Tell me, my daughters
(Since now we will divest us both of rule, 50
Interest of territory, cares of state),
Which of you shall we say doth love us most?
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge. Goneril,
Our eldest-born, speak first. 55

Gon. Sir, I love you more than words can wield the matter;
Dearer than eyesight, space, and liberty;
Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;

No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour;
As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found; 60
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable.
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

Cor. [*aside*] What shall Cordelia speak? Love, and be silent.

Lear. Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,
With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd, 65
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady. To thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual — What says our second daughter,
Our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall? Speak.

Reg. Sir, I am made 70
Of the selfsame metal that my sister is,
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
I find she names my very deed of love;
Only she comes too short, that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys 75
Which the most precious square of sense possesses,
And find I am alone felicitate
In your dear Highness' love.

Cor. [*aside*] Then poor Cordelia!
And yet not so; since I am sure my love's 80
More richer than my tongue.

Lear. To thee and thine hereditary ever
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom,
No less in space, validity, and pleasure
Than that conferr'd on Gonevil.—Now, our joy,
Although the last, not least; to whose young love 85
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive to be interest; what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.

Cor. Nothing, my lord.

Lear. Nothing ?

90

Cor. Nothing

Lear. Nothing can come of nothing. Speak again.

Cor. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave

My heart into my mouth. I love your Majesty

According to my bond ; no more nor less.

95

Lear. How, how, Cordelia ? Mend your speech a little,
Lest it may mar your fortunes.

Cor.

Good my lord,

You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me ; I

Return those duties back as are right fit,

Obeys you, love you, and most honour you.

100

Why have my sisters husbands, if they say

They love you all ? Haply, when I shall wed,

That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry

Half my love with him, half my care and duty.

Sure I shall never marry like my sisters,

105

To love my father all

Lear. But goes thy heart with this ?

Cor.

Ay, good my lord.

Lear. So young, and so untender ?

Cor. So young, my lord, and true.

Lear. Let it be so ! thy truth then be thy dower !

110

For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,

The mysteries of Hecate and the night ;

By all the operation of the orbs

From whom we do exist and cease to be ;

Here I disclaim all my paternal care,

115

Propinquity and property of blood,

And as a stranger to my heart and me

Hold thee from this for ever. The barbarous Scythian,

Or he that makes his generation messes

To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom

120

Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and reliev'd,
As thou my sometime daughter.

Kent.

Good my liege—

Lear. Peace, Kent!

Come not between the dragon and his wrath.

I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest 125

On her kind nursery.—Hence and avoid my sight!—

So be my grave my peace as here I give

Her father's heart from her! Call France! Who stirs?

Call Burgundy! Cornwall and Albany,

With my two daughters' dowers digest this third; 130

Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.

I do invest you jointly in my power,

Preëminence, and all the large effects

That troop with majesty. Ourself, by monthly course,

With reservation of an hundred knights, 135

By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode

Make with you by due turns. Only we still retain

The name, and all th' additions to a king. The sway,

Revenue, execution of the rest,

Beloved sons, be yours; which to confirm, 140

This coronet part betwixt you.

Kent.

Royal Lear,

Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,

Lov'd as my father, as my master follow'd,

As my great patron thought on in my prayers—

Lear. The bow is bent and drawn; make from the shaft.

Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade 146

The region of my heart! Be Kent unmannerly

When Lear is mad. What wouldst thou do, old man?

Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak

When power to flattery bows? To plainness honour's bound

When majesty falls to folly. Reverse thy doom; 151

And in thy best consideration check
This hideous rashness. Answer my life my judgment,
Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least,
Nor are those empty-hearted whose low sound 155
Reverbs no hollowness.

Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more!

Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thine enemies; nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being the motive.

Lear. Out of my sight!

Kent. See better, Lear, and let me still remain 160
The true blank of thine eye.

Lear. Now by Apollo—

Kent. Now by Apollo, King,
Thou swear'st thy gods in vain.

Lear. O vassal! miscreant!
[Lays his hand on his sword.]

Alb., Corn. Dear sir, forbear!

Kent. Do! 165

Kill thy physician, and the fee bestow
Upon the foul disease. Revoke thy gift,
Or, whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
I'll tell thee thou dost evil.

Lear. Hear me, recreant!

On thine allegiance, hear me! 170
Since thou hast sought to make us break our vow—
Which we durst never yet—and with strain'd pride
To come between our sentence and our power,—
Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,—
Our potency made good, take thy reward. 175
Five days we do allot thee for provision
To shield thee from diseases of the world,
And on the sixth to turn thy hated back

Upon our kingdom. If, on the tenth day following,
Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions, 180
The moment is thy death. Away! By Jupiter,
This shall not be revok'd.

Kent. Fare thee well, King. Since thus thou wilt appear,
Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here.

[*To Cordelia*] The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid,
That justly think'st and hast most rightly said! 186

[*To Regan and Goneril*] And your large speeches may your
deeds approve,

That good effects may spring from words of love.

Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu;

He'll shape his old course in a country new. 190

Exit.

Flourish. Enter Gloucester, with France and Burgundy;
Attendants.

Glou. Here's France and Burgundy, my noble lord.

Lear. My Lord of Burgundy,
We first address toward you, who with this king
Hath rivall'd for our daughter. What in the least
Will you require in present dower with her, 195
Or cease your quest of love?

Bur. Most royal Majesty,
I crave no more than hath your Highness offer'd,
Nor will you tender less.

Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
When she was dear to us, we did hold her so;
But now her price is fall'n. Sir, there she stands. 200
If aught within that little seeming substance,
Or all of it, with our displeasure piec'd,
And nothing more, may fitly like your Grace,
She's there, and she is yours.

Bur. I know no answer.

Lear. Will you, with those infirmities she owes, 205
Unfriended, new adopted to our hate,
Dow'r'd with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath,
Take her, or leave her?

Bur. Pardon me, royal sir.

Election makes not up on such conditions.

Lear. Then leave her, sir; for, by the pow'r that made 210
me,

I tell you all her wealth. [*To France*] For you, great King,
I would not from your love make such a stray
To match you where I hate; therefore beseech you
T' avert your liking a more worthier way
Than on a wretch whom nature is asham'd 215
Almost t' acknowledge hers

France. This is most strange,

That she that even but now was your best object,
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,
Most best, most dearest, should in this trice of time
Commit a thing so monstrous to dismantle 220
So many folds of favour. Sure her offence
Must be of such unnatural degree
That monsters it, or your fore-vouch'd affection
Fall'n into taint; which to believe of her
Must be a faith that reason without miracle 225
Should never plant in me.

Cor. I yet beseech your Majesty,

If for I want that glib and oily art
To speak and purpose not, since what I well intend,
I'll do't before I speak—that you make known
It is no vicious blot, murder, or foulness, 230
No unchaste action or dishonoured step,
That hath depriv'd me of your grace and favour;

But even for want of that for which I am richer—
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
As I am glad I have not, though not to have it
Hath lost me in your liking. 235

Lear. Better thou

Hadst not been born than not t' have pleas'd me better

Francè. Is it but this—a tardiness in nature
Which often leaves the history unspoke
That it intends to do? My Lord of Burgundy, 240
What say you to the lady? Love's not love
When it is mingled with regards that stands
Aloof from th' entire point. Will you have her?
She is herself a dowry.

Bur. Royal Lear,

Give but that portion which yourself propos'd, 245
And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
Duchess of Burgundy.

Lear. Nothing! I have sworn; I am firm.

Bur. I am sorry then you have so lost a father
That you must lose a husband.

Cor. Peace be with Burgundy! 250

Since that respects of fortune are his love,
I shall not be his wife.

France. Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor;
Most choice, forsaken; and most lov'd, despis'd!
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon. 255
Be it lawful I take up what's cast away.
Gods, gods! 'tis strange that from their cold'st neglect
My love should kindle to inflam'd respect.
Thy dow'rless daughter, King, thrown to my chance,
Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France. 260
Not all the dukes in wat'rish Burgundy
Can buy this unpriz'd precious maid of me.

Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind
Thou lovest here, a better where to find

Lear. Thou hast her, France; let her be thine; for we 265
Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see
That face of hers again. Therefore be gone
Without our grace, our love, our benison
Come, noble Burgundy.

*Flourish. Exeunt Lear, Burgundy, [Cornwall, Albany,
Gloucester, and Attendants].*

France. Bid farewell to your sisters. 270

Cor. The jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
Cordelia leaves you I know you what you are;
And, like a sister, am most loath to call
Your faults as they are nam'd Use well our father.
To your professed bosoms I commit him; 275
But yet, alas, stood I within his grace,
I would prefer him to a better place!
So farewell to you both.

Gon. Prescribe not us our duties.

Reg.

Let your study

Be to content your lord, who hath receiv'd you 280
At fortune's alms. You have obedience scanted,
And well are worth the want that you have wanted.

Cor. Time shall unfold what plighted cunning hides.
Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.
Well may you prosper!

France. Come, my fair Cordelia. 285

Exeunt France and Cordelia.

Gon. Sister, it is not little I have to say of what most nearly
appertains to us both. I think our father will hence to-night.

Reg. That's most certain, and with you; next month with
us. 290

Gon. You see how full of changes his age is. The observa-

tion we have made, of it hath not been little. He always lov'd our sister most, and with what poor judgment he hath now cast her off appears too grossly. 295

Reg. 'Tis the infirmity of his age; yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself.

Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath been but rash; then must we look to receive from his age, not alone the imperfections of long-ingrained condition, but therewithal the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them. 303

Reg. Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him as this of Kent's banishment.

Gon. There is further compliment of leave-taking between France and him. Pray you let's hit together. If our father carry authority with such dispositions as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us. 310

Reg. We shall further think on't.

Gon. We must do something, and I' th' heat.

Exeunt.

Scene II. [The Earl of Gloucester's Castle.]

Enter [*Edmund* the] *Bastard* solus, [with a letter].

Edm. Thou, Nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us

With base ? with baseness ? bastardy ? base, base ? 10
 Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take
 More composition and fierce quality
 Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,
 Go to th' creating a whole tribe of fops
 Got 'tween asleep and wake ? Well then, 15
 Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land.
 Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
 As to th' legitimate. Fine word—'legitimate'!
 Well, my legitimate, if this^r letter speed,
 And my invention thrive, Edmund the base 20
 Shall top th' legitimate. I grow ; I prosper
 Now, gods, stand up for bēstards !

Enter Gloucester.

Glou. Kent banish'd thus ? and France in choler parted ?
 And the King gone to-night ? subscrib'd his pow'r ?
 Confin'd to exhibition ? All this done 25
 Upon the gad ? Edmund, how now ? What news ?
 Edm. So please your lordship, none.

[Puts up the letter.]

Glou. Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter ?

Edm. I know no news, my lord.

Glou. What paper were you reading ? 30

Edm. Nothing, my lord.

Glou. No ? What needed then that terrible dispatch of it
 into your pocket ? The quality of nothing hath not such need
 to hide itself. Let's see. Come, if it be nothing, I shall not
 need spectacles. 36

Edm. I beseech you, sir, pardon me. It is a letter from my
 brother that I have not all o'er-read ; and for so much as I have
 perus'd, I find it not fit for your o'erlooking. 40

Glou. Give me the letter, sir.

Edm. I shall offend, either to detain or give it. The contents, as in part I understand them, are to blame.

Glou. Let's see, let's see!

45

Edm. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay or taste of my virtue

Glou. (*reads*) 'This policy and reverence of age makes the world bitter to the best of our times, keeps our fortunes from us till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny, who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffer'd. Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I wak'd him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother,'

57

'EDGAR'

Hum! Conspiracy? 'Sleep till I wak'd him, you should enjoy half his revenue.' My son Edgar! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in? When came this to you? Who brought it?

Edm. It was not brought me, my lord: there's the cunning of it. I found it thrown in at the casement of my closet.

65

Glou. You know the character to be your brother's?

Edm. If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear it were his; but in respect of that, I would fain think it were not.

Glou. It is his.

71

Edm. It is his hand, my lord; but I hope his heart is not in the contents.

Glou. Hath he never before sounded you in this business?

Edm. Never, my lord. But I have heard him oft maintain it to be fit that, sons at perfect age, and fathers declining, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

79

Glou. O villain, villain! His very opinion in the letter! Abhorred villain! Unnatural, detested, brutish villain! worse

than brutish! Go, sirrah, seek him. I'll apprehend him.
Abominable villain! Where is he? 84

Edm. I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother till you can derive from him better testimony of his intent, you should run a certain course, where, if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your own honour and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life for him that he hath writ this to feel my affection to your honour, and to no other pretence of danger.

Glou. Think you so? 96

Edm. If your honour judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction, and that without any further delay than this very evening 101

Glou. He cannot be such a monster.

Edm. Nor is not, sure.

Glou. To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him. Heaven and earth! Edmund, seek him out; wind me into him, I pray you; frame the business after your own wisdom. I would unstate myself to be in a due resolution.

Edm. I will seek him, sir, presently; convey the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal. 111

Glou. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us. Though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourg'd by the sequent effects. Love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide. In cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond crack'd 'twixt son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there's son against father: the King falls from bias of nature; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time. Machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders follow us disquietly to our graves. Find out

this villain, Edmund; it shall lose thee nothing, do it carefully. And the noble and true-hearted Kent banish'd! his offence, honesty! 'Tis strange. *Exit.*

Edm. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune, often the surfeit of our own behaviour, we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars; as if we were villains on necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on. An admirable evasion of whore-master man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star! My father compounded with my mother under the Dragon's Tail, and my nativity was under Ursa Major, so that it follows I am rough and lecherous. Fut! I should have been that I am, had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing. Edgar—

145

Enter Edgar.

and pat! he comes, like the catastrophe of the old comedy. My cue is villanous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o' Bedlam. O, these eclipses do portend these divisions! Fa, sol, la, mi.

Edg. How now, brother Edmund? What serious contemplation are you in?

151

Edm. I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

Edg. Do you busy yourself with that?

155

Edm. I promise you, the effects he writes of succeed unhappily: as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; needless

diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what. 163

Edg. How long have you been a sectary astronomical ?

Edm. Come, come ! When saw you my father last ?

Edg. The night gone by

Edm. Spake you with him ?

Edg. Ay, two hours together. 170

Edm. Parted you in good terms ? Found you no displeasure in him by word or countenance ?

Edg. None at all

Edm. Bethink yourself wherein you may have offended him ; and at my entreaty forbear his presence until some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure, which at this instant so rageth in him that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay

Edg. Some villain hath done me wrong 180

Edm. That's my fear I pray you have a continent forbearance till the speed of his rage goes slower ; and, as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my lord speak. Pray ye, go ! There's my key. If you do stir abroad, go arm'd 186

Edg. Arm'd, brother ?

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best Go arm'd. I am no honest man if there be any good meaning toward you. I have told you what I have seen and heard ; but faintly, nothing like the image and horror of it. Pray you, away !

Edg. Shall I hear from you anon ?

Edm. I do serve you in this business.

Exit Edgar.

195

A credulous father ! and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms
That he suspects none ; on whose foolish honesty
My practices ride easy ! I see the business.

Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit;
All with me's meet that I can fashion fit.

200

Exit.

Scene III. [The Duke of Albany's Palace.]

Enter *Goneril* and [her] *Steward* [*Oswald*].

Gon. Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his fool?

Osw. Ay, madam.

Gon. By day and night, he wrongs me! Every hour
He flashes into one gross crime or other
That sets us all at odds I'll not endure it. 5
His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
On every trifle. When he returns from hunting,
I will not speak with him. Say I am sick.
If you come slack of former services,
You shall do well; the fault of it I'll answer. 10

[*Horns within.*]

Osw. He's coming, madam; I hear him.

Gon. Put on what weary negligence you please,
You and your fellows. I'd have it come to question.
If he distaste it, let him to our sister,
Whose mind and mine I know in that are one, 15
Not to be overrul'd. Idle old man,
That still would manage those authorities
That he hath given away! Now, by my life,
Old fools are babes again, and must be us'd
With checks as flatteries, when they are seen abus'd. 20
Remember what I have said.

Osw.

Very well, madam.

Gon. And let his knights have colder looks among you.

What grows of it, no matter. Advise your fellows so
I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,
That I may speak I'll write straight to my sister 25
To hold my very course. Prepare for dinner.

Exeunt

Scene IV. [The Duke of Albany's Palace.]

Enter Kent, [disguised].

Kent. If but as well I other accents borrow,
That can my speech defuse, my good intent
May carry through itself to that full issue
For which I raz'd my likeness. Now, banish'd Kent,
If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn'd, 5
So may it come, thy master, whom thou lov'st,
Shall find thee full of labours.

Horns within. Enter Lear, [Knights,] and Attendants.

Lear. Let me not stay a jot for dinner; go get it ready. [*Exit
an Attendant.*] How now? What art thou? 10

Kent. A man, sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess? What wouldst thou with
us?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem, to serve him
truly that will put me in trust, to love him that is honest, to
converse with him that is wise and says little, to fear judgment,
to fight when I cannot choose, and to eat no fish.

Lear. What art thou? 19

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the King

Lear. If thou be'st as poor for a subject as he's for a king,
thou art poor enough. What wouldst thou?

Kent. Service. 25

Lear. Who wouldst thou serve?

Kent. You.

Lear. Dost thou know me, fellow?

Kent. No, sir; but you have that in your countenance which
I would fain call master. 30

Lear. What's that?

Kent. Authority

Lear. What services canst thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious
tale in telling it and deliver a plain message bluntly. That
which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in, and the best
of me is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou? 39

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing, nor
so old to dote on her for anything. I have years on my back
forty-eight.

Lear. Follow me; thou shalt serve me. If I like thee no
worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet. Dinner, ho,
dinner! Where's my knave? my fool? Go you and call my
fool hither.

[*Exit an Attendant.*]

Enter [*Oswald* the] *Steward*.

You, you, sirrah, where's my daughter? 48

Osw. So please you— *Exit.*

Lear. What says the fellow there? Call the clotpoll back.
[*Exit a Knight.*] Where's my fool, ho? I think the world's
asleep.

[*Enter Knight*] 

How now? Where's that mongrel?

Knight. He says, my lord, your daughter is not well. 55

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me when I call'd him?

Knight. Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not? 60

Knight. My lord, I know not what the matter is; but to my judgment your Highness is not entertain'd with that ceremonious affection as you were wont. There's a great abatement of kindness appears as well in the general dependants as in the Duke himself also and your daughter. 66

Lear. Ha! say'st thou so? 67

Knight. I beseech you pardon me, my lord, if I be mistaken; for my duty cannot be silent when I think your Highness wrong'd. 71

Lear. Thou but remember'st me of mine own conception. I have perceived a most faint neglect of late, which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity than as a very pretence and purpose of unkindness. I will look further into't. But where's my fool? I have not seen him this two days.

Knight. Since my young lady's going into France, sir, the fool hath much pined away. 80

Lear. No more of that; I have noted it well. Go you and tell my daughter I would speak with her. [*Exit Knight.*] Go you, call hither my fool.

[*Exit an Attendant*]

Enter [*Oswald the*] *Steward*

O, you, sir, you! Come you hither, sir. Who am I, sir? 85

Osw. My lady's father.

Lear. 'My lady's father'? My lord's knave! You whoreson dog! you slave! you cur! 89

Osw. I am none of these, my lord; I beseech your pardon.

Lear. Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal?

[*Strikes him.*]

Osw. I'll not be stricken, my lord.

Kent. Nor tripp'd neither, you base football player ? 95
[*Trips up his heels.*]

Lear. I thank thee, fellow. Thou serv'st me, and I'll love thee.

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away ! I'll teach you differences
Away, away ! If you will measure your lubber's length again,
tarry ; but away ! Go to ! Have you wisdom ? So 102
[*Pushes him out.*]

Lear. Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee There's earnest
of thy service. [*Gives money.*]

Enter Fool.

Fool. Let me hire him too. Here's my coxcomb. 106
[*Offers Kent his cap*]

Lear. How now, my pretty knave ? How dost thou ?

Fool. Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb

Kent. Why, fool ? 110

Fool. Why ? For taking one's part that's out of favour. Nay,
an thou canst not smile as the wind sits, thou'lt catch cold
shortly. There, take my coxcomb ! Why, this fellow hath ban-
ish'd two on's daughters, and did the third a blessing against
his will. If thou follow him, thou must needs wear my cox-
comb.—How now, nuncle ? Would I had two coxcombs and
two daughters !

Lear. Why, my boy ? 119

Fool. If I gave them all my living, I'd keep my coxcombs
myself. There's mine ! beg another of thy daughters

Lear. Take heed, sirrah—the whip.

Fool. Truth's a dog must to kennel ; he must be whipp'd
out, when Lady the brach may stand by th' fire and stink. * 126

Lear. A pestilent gall to me !

Fool. Sirrah, I'll teach thee a speech.

Lear. Do.

Fool Mark it, nuncle. 130

Have more than thou showest,
Speak less than thou knowest,
Lend less than thou owest,
Ride more than thou goest,
Learn more than thou trowest, 135
Set less than thou throwest;
Leave thy drink and thy whore,
And keep in-a-door,
And thou shalt have more
Than two tens to a score 140

Kent. This is nothing, fool.

Fool. Then 'tis like the breath of an unfeed lawyer—you gave me nothing for't. Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle? 144

Lear. Why, no, boy. Nothing can be made out of nothing.

Fool. [*to Kent*] Prithee tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to. He will not believe a fool.

Lear. A bitter fool! 150

Fool. Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet fool?

Lear. No, lad; teach me.

Fool. *That lord that 'counsell'd thee
To give away thy land, 155
Come place him here by me—
Do thou for him stand.
The sweet and bitter fool
Will presently appear;
The one in motley here, 160
The other found out there.

Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy?

Fool. All thy other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with.

Kent. This is not altogether fool, my lord. 165

Fool. No, faith; lords and great men will not let me. If I had a monopoly out, they would have part on't. And ladies too, they will not let me have all the fool to myself; they'll be snatching. Give me an egg, nuncle, and I'll give thee two crowns. 171

Lear. What two crowns shall they be?

Fool. Why, after I have cut the egg i' th' middle and eat up the meat, the two crowns of the egg. When thou clovest thy crown i' th' middle and gav'st away both parts, thou bor'st thine ass on thy back o'er the dirt. Thou hadst little wit in thy bald crown when thou gav'st thy golden one away. If I speak like myself in this, let him be whipp'd that first finds it so. 180

[*Sings*] Fools had ne'er less grace in a year,
For wise men are grown foppish;
They know not how their wits to wear,
Their manners are so apish. 184

Lear. When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah?

Fool. I have us'd it, nuncle, ever since thou mad'st thy daughters thy mother; for when thou gav'st them the rod, and put'st down thine own breeches, 190

[*Sings*] Then they for sudden joy did weep,
And I for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep
And go the fools among.

Prithee, nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach thy fool to lie. I would fain learn to lie.

Lear. An you lie, sirrah, we'll have you whipp'd. 197

Fool. I marvel what kin thou and thy daughters are. They'll have me whipp'd for speaking true; thou'lt have me whipp'd for lying; and sometimes I am whipp'd for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind o' thing than a fool! And yet I would

not be thee, nuncle. Thou hast pared thy wit o' both sides and left nothing i' th' middle. Here comes one o' the parings. 206

Enter *Goneril*.

Lear. How now, daughter? What makes that frontlet on? Methinks you are too much o' late i' th' frown. 209

Fool. Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou hadst no need to care for her frowning. Now thou art an O without a figure. I am better than thou art now: I am a fool, thou art nothing. [*To Goneril*] Yes, forsooth, I will hold my tongue. So your face bids me, though you say nothing Mum, mum! 216

He that keeps nor crust nor crum,
Weary of all, shall want some.—

[*Points at Lear*] That's a sheal'd peascod.

Gon. Not only, sir, this your all-licens'd fool, 220
But other of your insolent retinue
Do hourly carp and quarrel, breaking forth
In rank and not-to-be-endured riots. Sir,
I had thought, by making this well known unto you,
To have found a safe redress, but now grow fearful, 225
By what yourself, too, late have spoke and done,
That you protect this course, and put it on
By your allowance; which if you should, the fault
Would not scape censure, nor the redresses sleep,
Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal, 230
Might in their working do you that offence
Which else were shame, that they necessity
Must call discreet proceeding.

Fool. For you know, nuncle,

The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long 235
That it had it head bit off by it young.

So out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. Come, sir,

I would you would make use of that good wisdom 240
Whereof I know you are fraught, and put away
These dispositions that of late transform you
From what you rightly are.

Fool. May not an ass know when the cart draws the horse?
Whoop, Jug, I love thee! 245

Lear. Doth any here know me? This is not Lear.
Doth Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?
Either his notion weakens, his discernings
Are lethargied—Ha! waking? 'Tis not so!
Who is it that can tell me who I am? 250

Fool. Lear's shadow.

Lear. I would learn that; for, by the marks of sovereignty,
Knowledge, and reason, I should be false persuaded
I had daughters.

Fool. Which they will make an obedient father. 256

Lear. Your name, fair gentlewoman?

Gon. This admiration, sir, is much o' th' savour
Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you
To understand my purposes aright. 260
As you are old and reverend, you should be wise.
Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires;
Men so disorder'd, so debosh'd, and bold
That this our court, infected with their manners,
Shows like a riotous inn. Epicurism and lust 265
Make it more like a tavern or a brothel
Than a grac'd palace. The shame itself doth speak
For instant remedy. Be then desir'd
By her that else will take the thing she begs
A little to disquantity your train,
And the remainder that shall still depend

To be such men as may besort your age,
Which know themselves, and you

Lear. Darkness and devils!

Saddle my horses! Call my train together!
Degenerate bastard, I'll not trouble thee, 275
Yet have I left a daughter.

Gon. You strike my people, and your disorder'd rabble
Make servants of their betters.

Enter Albany.

Lear. Woe that too late repents!—O, sir, are you come?
Is it your will? Speak, sir!—Prepare my horses. 280
Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child
Than the sea-monster!

Alb. Pray, sir, be patient.

Lear. [*to Goneril*] Detested kite, thou liest!
My train are men of choice and rarest parts, 285
That all particulars of duty know
And in the most exact regard support
The worships of their name.—O most small fault,
How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show!
Which, like an engine, wrench'd my frame of nature 290
From the fix'd place; drew from my heart all love
And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!
Beat at this gate that let thy folly in [*Strikes his head.*]
And thy dear judgment out! Go, go, my people.

Alb. My lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant 295
Of what hath mov'd you.

Lear. It may be so, my lord.
Hear, Nature, hear! dear goddess, hear!
Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend
To make this creature fruitful.

Into her womb convey sterility,
Dry up in her the organs of increase;
And from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honour her! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen, that it may live
And be a thwart disnatur'd torment to her. 300
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth,
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks,
Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt, that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is 310
To have a thankless child! Away, away! *Exit.*
Alb. Now, gods that we adore, whereof comes this?
Gon. Never afflict yourself to know the cause;
But let his disposition have that scope
That dotage gives it. 315

Enter Lear.

Lear. What, fifty of my followers at a clap?
Within a fortnight?

Alb. What's the matter, sir?

Lear. I'll tell thee. [*To Goneril*] Life and death! I am
asham'd
That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus,
That these hot tears, which break from me perforce, 320
Should make thee worth them. Blasts and fogs upon thee!
Th' untented woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee!—Old fond eyes,
Beweepe this cause again, I'll pluck ye out,
And cast you, with the waters that you lose, 325
To temper clay. Yea, is it come to this?
Let it be so. Yet have I left a daughter,
Who I am sure is kind and comfortable.

When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails
She'll flay thy wolfish visage. Thou shalt find 330
That I'll resume the shape which thou dost think
I have cast off for ever; thou shalt, I warrant thee.

Exeunt [Lear, Kent, and Attendants].

Gon. Do you mark that, my lord?

Alb. I cannot be so partial, Goneril,
To the great love I bear you— 335

Gon. Pray you, content.—What, Oswald, ho!

[*To the Fool*] You, sir, more knave than fool, after your
master!

Fool. Nuncle Lear, nuncle Lear, tarry! Take the fool with
thee.

A fox, when one has caught her, 340
And such a daughter,
Should sure to the slaughter,
If my cap would buy a halter
So the fool follows after. *Exit.*

Gon. This man hath had good counsel! A hundred
knights?

'Tis politic and safe to let him keep 346
At point a hundred knights; yes, that on every dream,
Each buzz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,
He may enguard his dotage with their pow'rs
And hold our lives in mercy.—Oswald, I say! 350

Alb. Well, you may fear too far

Gon. Safer than trust too far.

Let me still take away the harms I fear,
Not fear still to be taken. I know his heart.
What he hath utter'd I have writ my sister.
If she sustain him and his hundred knights, 355
When I have show'd th' unfitness—

Enter [*Oswald* the] *Steward*

How now, *Oswald*?

What, have you writ that letter to my sister?

Osw. Yes, madam.

Gon. Take you some company, and away to horse!

Inform her full of my particular fear, 360

And thereto add such reasons of your own

As may compact it more. Get you gone,

And hasten your return. [*Exit Oswald.*] No, no, my lord!

This milky gentleness and course of yours,

Though I condemn it not, yet, under pardon, 365

You are much more at task for want of wisdom

Than prais'd for harmful mildness.

Alb. How far your eyes may pierce I cannot tell.

Striving to better, oft we mar what's well.

Gon. Nay then—

370

Alb. Well, well; th' event.

Exeunt.

Scene V. [*Court before the Duke of Albany's Palace.*]

Enter *Lear*, *Kent*, and *Fool*.

Lear. Go you before to Gloucester with these letters. Acquaint my daughter no further with anything you know than comes from her demand out of the letter. If your diligence be not speedy, I shall be there afore you. 5

Kent. I will not sleep, my lord, till I have delivered your letter. *Exit.*

Fool. If a man's brains were in's heels, were't not in danger of kibes?

Lear. Ay, boy.

Fool. Then I prithee be merry. Thy wit shall ne'er go slipshod.

Lear. Ha, ha, ha!

Fool. Shalt see thy other daughter will use thee kindly, for though she's as like this as a crab's like an apple, yet I can tell what I can tell. 16

Lear. What canst tell, boy?

Fool. She'll taste as like this as a crab does to a crab. Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i' th' middle on's face? 20

Lear. No.

Fool. Why, to keep one's eyes of either side's nose, that what a man cannot smell out, 'a may spy into.

Lear. I did her wrong. 25

Fool. Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?

Lear. No.

Fool. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

Lear. Why? 31

Fool. Why, to put's head in, not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a case

Lear. I will forget my nature. So kind a father!—Be my horses ready? 36

Fool. Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.

Lear. Because they are not eight? 40

Fool. Yes indeed. Thou wouldst make a good fool.

Lear. To tak't again perforce! Monster ingratitude!

Fool. If thou wert my fool, nuncle, I'd have thee beaten for being old before thy time. 45

Lear. How's that?

Fool. Thou shouldst not have been old till thou hadst been wise.

Lear. O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven!
Keep me in temper; I would not be mad! 50

• [Enter a *Gentleman*.]

How now? Are the horses ready?

Gent. Ready, my lord.

Lear. Come, boy.

Fool. She that's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,
Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter. 55

Exeunt.

ACT II. Scene I. [*A court within the Castle of the Earl of Gloucester.*]

Enter [*Edmund the*] *Bastard* and *Curan*, meeting.

Edm. Save thee, Curan.

Cur. And you, sir. I have been with your father, and given him notice that the Duke of Cornwall and Regan his Duchess will be here with him this night. 5

Edm. How comes that?

Cur. Nay, I know not. You have heard of the news abroad—I mean the whisper'd ones, for they are yet but ear-kissing arguments?

Edm. Not I. Pray you, what are they? 10

Cur. Have you heard of no likely wars toward 'twixt the two Dukes of Cornwall and Albany?

Edm. Not a word.

Cur. You may do, then, in time. Fare you well, sir. *Exit.*

Edm. The Duke be here to-night? The better! best! 16
This weaves itself perforce into my business.
My father hath set guard to take my brother;
And I have one thing, of a queasy question,
Which I must act. Briefness and fortune, work! 20
Brother, a word! Descend! Brother, I say!

Enter *Edgar*.

My father watches. O sir, fly this place!
Intelligence is given where you are hid.
You have now the good advantage of the night.
Have you not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornwall? 25
He's coming hither; now, i' th' night, i' th' haste,
And Regan with him. Have you nothing said
Upon his party 'gainst the Duke of Albany?
Advise yourself.

Edg. I am sure on't, not a word.

Edm. I hear my father coming. Pardon me! 30
In cunning I must draw my sword upon you
Draw, seem to defend yourself, now quit you well —
Yield! Come before my father. Light, ho, here!
Fly, brother — Torches, torches! — So farewell.

Exit Edgar.

Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion 35
Of my more fierce endeavour. [*Stabs his arm.*] I have seen
drunkards

Do more than this in sport. — Father, father! —
Stop, stop! No help?

Enter Gloucester, and Servants with torches.

Glou. Now, Edmund, where's the villain?

Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out, 40
Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon
To stand 's auspicious mistress.

Glou. But where is he?

Edm. Look, sir, I bleed.

Glou. Where is the villain, Edmund?

Edm. Fled this way, sir. When by no means he could —

Glou. Pursue him, ho! Go after. [*Exeunt some Servants.*] ' 45
By no means what?

Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lordship;
But that I told him the revenging gods
'Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend;
Spoke with how manifold and strong a bond
The child was bound to th' father — 'sir, in fine, 50
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion
With his prepared sword he charges home
My unprovided body, lanch'd mine arm;

But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits, 55
Bold in the quarrel's right, rous'd to th' encounter,
Or whether gasted by the noise I made,
Full suddenly he fled.

Glou. Let him fly far.
Not in this land shall he remain uncaught;
And found—dispatch. The noble Duke my master, 60
My worthy arch and patron, comes to-night.
By his authority I will proclaim it,
That he which finds him shall deserve our thanks,
Bringing the murderous catiff to the stake;
He that conceals him, death 65

Edm. When I dissuaded him from his intent
And found him pight to do it, with curst speech
I threaten'd to discover him. He replied,
'Thou unpossessing bastard, dost thou think,
If I would stand against thee, would the reposal 70
Of any trust, virtue, or worth in thee
Make thy words faith'd? No. What I should deny
(As this I would; ay, though thou didst produce
My very character), I'd turn it all
To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practice; 75
And thou must make a dullard of the world,
If they not thought the profits of my death
Were very pregnant and potential spurs
To make thee seek it.'

Glou. Strong and fast'ned villain!
Would he deny his letter? I never got him. 80

Tucket within.

Hark, the Duke's trumpets! I know not why he comes.
All ports I'll bar; the villain shall not scape;
The Duke must grant me that. Besides, his picture
I will send far and near, that all the kingdom

May have due note, of him, and of my land, 85
Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means
To make thee capable.

Enter Cornwall, Regan, and Attendants.

Corn. How now, my noble friend? Since I came hither
(Which I can call but now) I have heard strange news.

Reg. If it be true, all vengeance comes too short 90
Which can pursue th' offender. How dost, my lord?

Glou. O madam, my old heart is crack'd, it's crack'd!

Reg. What, did my father's godson seek your life?
He whom my father nam'd? Your Edgar?

Glou. O lady, lady, shame would have it hid! 95

Reg. Was he not companion with the riotous knights
That tend upon my father?

Glou. I know not, madam. 'Tis too bad, too bad!

Edm. Yes, madam, he was of that consort.

Reg. No marvel then though he were ill affected. 100
'Tis they have put him on the old man's death,
To have th' expense and waste of his revenues.
I have this present evening from my sister
Been well inform'd of them, and with such cautions
That, if they come to sojourn at my house, 105
I'll not be there.

Corn. Nor I, assure thee, Regan.
Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father
A childlike office.

Edm. 'Twas my duty, sir.

Glou. He did bewray his practice, and receiv'd
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him 110

Corn. Is he pursued?

Glou. Ay, my good lord.

Corn. If he be taken, he shall never more

Be fear'd of doing harm. Make your own purpose,
How in my strength you please. For you, Edmund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant 115
So much commend itself, you shall be ours
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need;
You we first seize on.

Edm I shall serve you, sir,
Truly, however else.

Glou. For him I thank your Grace.

Corn. You know not why we came to visit you— 120

Reg. Thus out of season, threading dark-ey'd night.
Occasions, noble Gloucester, of some poise,
Wherein we must have use of your advice.
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I best thought it fit 125
To answer from our home The several messengers
From hence attend dispatch. Our good old friend,
Lay comforts to your bosom, and bestow
Your needful counsel to our business,
Which craves the instant use

Glou. I serve you, madam. 130
Your Graces are right welcome.

Exeunt. Flourish

Scene II. [*Before Gloucester's Castle.*]

Enter *Kent* and [*Oswald, the*] *Steward*, severally.

Osw. Good dawning to thee, friend. Art of this house?

Kent. Ay.

Osw. Where may we set our horses?

Kent. I' th' mire. 5

Osw. Prithce, if thou lov'st me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee, not.

Osw. Why then, I care not for thee.

Kent. If I had thee in Lipsbury Pinfold, I would make thee
care for me. 10

Osw. Why dost thou use me thus? I know thee not.

Kent. Fellow, I know thee.

Osw. •What dost thou know me for? 14

Kent. A knave; a rascal; an eater of broken meats; a base,
proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy,
worsted-stocking knave; a lily-liver'd, action-taking, whoreson,
glass-gazing, superserviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting
slave; one that wouldst be a bawd in way of good service,
and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward,
pander, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch; one whom I
will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deny the least syllable
of thy addition.

Osw. Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail
on one that's neither known of thee nor knows thee! 29

Kent. What a brazen-fac'd varlet art thou, to deny thou
knowest me! Is it two days ago since I beat thee and tripp'd
up thy heels before the King? [*Draws his sword.*] Draw, you
rogue! for, though it be night, yet the moon shines. I'll make
a sop o' th' moonshine o' you. Draw, you whoreson cullionly
barbermonger! draw! 36

Osw. Away! I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw, you rascal! You come with letters against the
King, and take Vanity the puppet's part against the royalty of
her father. Draw, you rogue, or I'll so carbonado your shanks!
Draw, you rascal! Come your ways!

Osw. Help, ho! murder! help!

Kent. Strike, you slave! Stand, rogue! Stand, you neat
slave! Strike! [*Beats him.*]

Osw. Help. ho! murder! murder! 46

Enter *Edmund*, with his rapier drawn, *Gloucester*, *Cornwall*,
Regan, *Servants*.

Edm. How now? What's the matter? *Parts [them]*

Kent. With you, goodman boy, an you please! Come, I'll
flesh ye! Come on, young master!

Glou. Weapons? arms? What's the matter here? 51

Corn. Keep peace, upon your lives!

He dies that strikes again. What is the matter?

Reg. The messengers from our sister and the King. 55

Corn. What is your difference? Speak

Osw. I am scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestirr'd your valour. You
cowardly rascal, nature disclaims in thee; a tailor made
thee.

Corn. Thou art a strange fellow. A tailor make a man?

Kent. Ay, a tailor, sir. A stonecutter or a painter could not
have made him so ill, though he had been but two hours at
the trade. 65

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

Osw. This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spar'd
At suit of his grey beard—

Kent. Thou whoreson zed! thou unnecessary letter! My
lord, if you'll give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain
into mortar and daub the walls of a jakes with him. 'Spare
my grey beard,' you wagtail?

Corn. Peace, sirrah!

You beastly knave, know you norreverence? 75

Kent. Yes, sir, but anger hath a privilege.

Corn. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords atwain 80

Which are too intripse t' unloose, smooth every passion
That in the natures of their lords rebel,
Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;
Renege, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks
With every gale and vary of their masters, 85
Knowing naught (like dogs) but following.

A plague upon your epileptic visage!
Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool?
Goose, an I had you upon Sarum Plain,
I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot. 90

Corn. What, art thou mad, old fellow?

Glou. How fell you out? Say that.

Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy
Than I and such a knave

Corn. Why dost thou call him knave? What is his fault?

Kent. His countenance likes me not 96

Corn. No more perchance does mine, or his, or hers.

Kent. Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain.

I have seen better faces in my time
Than stands on any shoulder that I see 100
Before me at this instant.

Corn. This is some fellow

Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb
Quite from his nature. He cannot flatter, he!
An honest mind and plain—he must speak truth! 105
An they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.

These kind of knaves I know² which in this plainness
Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends
Than twenty silly-ducking observants
That stretch their duties nicely. 110

Kent. Sir, in good faith, in sincere verity,
Under th' allowance of your great aspect,

Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire
On flickering Phœbus' front—

Corn. What mean'st by this?

Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you discommend so much. I know, sir, I am no flatterer. He that beguil'd you in a plain accent was a plain knave, which, for my part, I will not be, though I should win your displeasure to entreat me to't. 120

Corn. What was th' offence you gave him?

Osw. I never gave him any.

It pleas'd the King his master very late
To strike at me, upon his misconstruction;
When he, conjunct, and flattering his displeasure, 125
Tripp'd me behind; being down, insulted, rail'd
And put upon him such a deal of man
That worthied him, got praises of the King
For him attempting who was self-subdu'd;
And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit, 130
Drew on me here again.

Kent. None of these rogues and cowards
But Ajax is their fool

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks!
You stubborn ancient knave, you reverent braggart,
We'll teach you—

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn.
Call not your stocks for me. I serve the King; 135
On whose employment I was sent to you.
You shall do small respect, show too bold malice
Against the grace and person of my master,
Stocking his messenger.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks! As I have life and honour, 140
There shall he sit till noon.

Reg. Till noon? Till night, my lord, and all night too!

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

Corn. This is a fellow of the selfsame colour 145
Our sister speaks of. Come, bring away the stocks!

Stocks brought out.

Glou. Let me beseech your Grace not to do so
His fault is much, and the good King his master
Will check him for't Your purpos'd low correction
Is such as basest and condemn'dest wretches 150
For pilf'rings and most common trespasses
Are punish'd with. The King must take it ill
That he, so slightly valued in his messenger,
Should have him thus restrain'd

Corn. I'll answer that.

Reg. My sister may receive it much more worse, 155
To have her gentleman abus'd, assaulted,
For following her affairs. Put in his legs.—

[Kent is put in the stocks.]

Come, my good lord, away.

Exeunt [all but Gloucester and Kent].

Glou. I am sorry for thee, friend. 'Tis the Duke's pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows, 160
Will not be rubb'd nor stopp'd I'll entreat for thee.

Kent. Pray do not, sir. I have watch'd and travell'd hard.
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels.
Give you good morrow! 165

Glou. The Duke's to blame in this? 'twill be ill taken *Exit.*

Kent. Good King, that must approve the common saw,
Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st
To the warm sun!
Approach, thou beacon to this under globe, 170

That by thy comfortable beams I may
 Peruse this letter. Nothing almost sees miracles
 But misery. I know 'tis from Cordelia,
 Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
 Of my obscured course—and [*reads*] 'shall find time 175
 From this enormous state, seeking to give
 Losses their remedies'—All weary and o'erwatch'd,
 Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
 This shameful lodging 179
 Fortune, good night; smile once more, turn thy wheel *Sleeps*

[Scene III. *The open country.*]

Enter *Edgar*.

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd,
 And by the happy hollow of a tree
 Escap'd the hunt. No port is free, no place
 That guard and most unusual vigilance
 Does not attend my taking. Whiles I may scape, 5
 I will preserve myself, and am bethought
 To take the basest and most poorest shape
 That ever penury, in contempt of man,
 Brought near to beast. My face I'll grime with filth,
 Blanket my loins, elf all my hair in knots, 10
 And with presented nakedness outface
 The winds and persecutions of the sky.
 The country gives me proof and precedent
 Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,
 Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms 15
 Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;
 And with this horrible object, from low farms,
 Poor pelting villages, sheepcotes, and mills,

Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,
Enforce their charity. 'Poor Turlygod! poor Tom!' 20
That's something yet! Edgar I nothing am. *Exit.*

[Scene IV. *Before Gloucester's Castle; Kent in the stocks.*]

Enter *Lear, Fool, and Gentleman.*

Lear. 'Tis strange that they should so depart from home,
And not send back my messenger.,

Gent. As I learn'd,
The night before there was no purpose in them
Of this remove.

Kent. Hail to thee, noble master!

Lear. Ha! 5
Mak'st thou this shame thy pastime?

Kent. No, my lord.

Fool. Ha, ha! look! he wears cruel garters.
Horses are tied by the head, dogs and bears by th' neck, mon-
keys by th' loins, and men by th' legs. When a man's over-lusty
at legs, then he wears wooden nether-stocks. 11

Lear. What's he that hath so much thy place mistook
To set thee here?

Kent. It is both he and she—
Your son and daughter.

Lear. No. 15

Kent. Yes

Lear. No, I say.

Kent. I say yea.

Lear. No, no, they would not!

Kent. Yes, they have. 20

Lear. By Jupiter, I swear no!

Kent. By Juno, I swear ay!

Lear. They durst not do't;
They would not, could not do't. 'Tis worse than murder
To do upon respect such violent outrage
Resolve me with all modest haste which way 25
Thou mightst deserve or they impose this usage,
Coming from us.

Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your Highness' letters to them,
Ere I was risen from the place that show'd
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post, 30
Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth
From Goneril his mistress salutations;
Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,
Which presently they read; on whose contents,
They summon'd up their meiny, straight took horse, 35
Commanded me to follow and attend
The leisure of their answer, gave me cold looks,
And meeting here the other messenger,
Whose welcome I perceiv'd had poison'd mine—
Being the very fellow which of late 40
Display'd so saucily against your Highness—
Having more man than wit about me, drew.
He rais'd the house with loud and coward cries.
Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
The shame which here it suffers 45

Fool. Winter's not gone yet, if the wild geese fly that way.

Fathers that wear rags
Do make their children blind;
But fathers that bear bags 50
Shall see their children kind.
Fortune, that arrant whore,
Ne'er turns the key to th' poor.

But for all this, thou shalt have as many dolours for thy daughters as thou canst tell in a year. 55

Lear. O, how this mother swells up toward my heart!
Hysterica passio! Down, thou climbing sorrow!
Thy element's below! Where is this daughter?

Kent. With the Earl, sir, here within.

Lear. Follow me not; 59
Stay here. *Exit.*

Gent. Made you no more offence but what you speak of?

Kent. None.

How chance the King comes with so small a number?

Fool. An thou hadst been set i' th' stocks for that question, thou'dst well deserv'd it 66

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. We'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there's no labouring i' th' winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes but blind men, and there's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that's stinking. Let go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it; but the great one that goes upward, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again. I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.

That sir which serves and seeks for gain,
And follows but for form, 80

Will pack when it begins to rain

And leave thee in the storm.

But I will tarry; the fool will stay,

And let the wise man fly.

The knave turns fool that runs away; 85

The fool no knave, perdy.

Kent. Where learn'd you this, fool?

Fool. Not i' th' stocks, fool.

Enter *Lear* and *Gloucester*.

Lear. Deny to speak with me? They are sick? they are weary?

They have travell'd all the night? Mere fetches— 90
The images of revolt and flying off!
Fetch me a better answer.

Glou. My dear lord,
You know the fiery quality of the Duke,
How unremovable and fix'd he is
In his own course. 95

Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!
Fiery? What quality? Why, Gloucester, Gloucester,
I'd speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife.

Glou. Well, my good lord, I have inform'd them so

Lear. Inform'd them? Dost thou understand me, man? 100

Glou. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. The King would speak with Cornwall; the dear father
Would with his daughter speak, commands her service
Are they inform'd of this? My breath and blood!
Fiery? the fiery Duke? Tell the hot Duke that— 105
No, but not yet! May be he is not well.

Infirmity doth still neglect all office
Whereto our health is bound. We are not ourselves
When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind
To suffer with the body. I'll forbear; 110
And am fallen out with my more headier will,
To take the indispos'd and sickly fit

For the sound man.—Death on my state! Wherefore
Should he sit here? This act persuades me
That this remotion of the Duke and her 115
Is practice only. Give me my servant forth.
Go tell the Duke and 's wife I'd speak with them—

Now, presently. Bid them come forth and hear me,
Or at their chamber door I'll beat the drum
Till it cry sleep to death.

120

Glou. I would have all well betwixt you.

Exit.

Lear. O me, my heart, my rising heart! But down!

Fool. Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to the eels when she put 'em i' th' paste alive. She knapp'd 'em o' th' coxcombs with a stick and cried 'Down, wantons, down!' 'Twas her brother that, in pure kindness to his horse, buttered his hay.

Enter Cornwall, Regan, Gloucester, Servants.

Lear. Good morrow to you both.

Corn.

Hail to your Grace!

Kent here set at liberty.

Reg. I am glad to see your Highness.

130

Lear. Regan, I think you are; I know what reason
I have to think so. If thou shouldst not be glad,
I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,
Sepulchring an adultress. [*To Kent*] O, are you free?
Some other time for that.—Beloved Regan,
Thy sister's naught. O Regan, she hath tied
Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here!"

135

[*Lays his hand on his heart.*]

I can scarce speak to thee. Thou'lt not believe
With how depriv'd a quality—O Regan!

Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience. I have hope
You less know how to value her desert
Than she to scant her duty.

140

Lear. Say, how is that?

Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation. If, sir, perchance
She have restrain'd the riots of your followers,

'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.

Lear. My curses on her!

Reg. O, sir, you are old!

Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine. You should be rul'd, and led 150
By some discretion that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. Therefore I pray you
That to our sister you do make return;
Say you have wrong'd her, sir.

Lear. Ask her forgiveness?

Do you but mark how this becomes the house: 155

'Dear daughter, I confess that I am old. [Kneels.]

Age is unnecessary On my knees I beg
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.'

Reg. Good sir, no more! These are unsightly tricks.
Return you to my sister.

Lear. [rises] Never, Regan! 160

She hath abated me of half my train;
Look'd black upon me; struck me with her tongue,
Most serpent-like, upon the very heart.
All the stor'd vengeance of heaven fall
On her ingrateful top! Strike her young bones, 165
You taking airs, with lameness!

Corn. Fie, sir, fie!

Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty,
You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the pow'rful sun,
To fall and blast her pride! 170

Reg. O the blest gods! so will you wish on me
When the rash mood is on.

Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse.
Thy tender-hefted nature shall not give

Thee o'er to harshness³. Her eyes are fierce, but thine 175
Do comfort, and not burn. 'Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in. Thou better know'st 180
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude.
Thy half o' th' kingdom hast thou not forgot,
Wherein I thee endow'd.

Reg. Good sir, to th' purpose.

Tucket within.

Lear. Who put my man i' th' stocks?

Corn. What trumpet's that? 185

Reg. I know't—my sister's. This approves her letter,
That she would soon be here.

Enter [*Oswald the*] *Steward*.

Is your lady come?

Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrowed pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows.
Out, varlet, from my sight!

Corn. What means your Grace? 190

Enter *Goneril*.

Lear. Who stock'd my servant? Regan, I have good hope
Thou didst not know on't.—Who comes here? O heavens!
If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow obedience—if yourselves are old,
Make it your cause! Send down, and take my part! 195
[*To Goneril*] Art not ashamed to look upon this beard?—
O Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand?

Gon. Why not by th' hand, sir? How have I offended?
All's not offence that indiscretion finds
And dotage terms so.

Lear. O sides, you are too tough! 200
Will you yet hold? How came my man i' th' stocks?

Corn. I set him there, sir; but his own disorders
Deserv'd much less advancement.

Lear. You? Did you?

Reg. I pray you, father, being weak, seem so.
If, till the expiration of your month, 205
You will return and sojourn with my sister,
Dismissing half your train, come then to me.
I am now from home, and out of that provision
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return to her, and fifty men dismiss'd? 210
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
To wage against the enmity o' th' air,
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl—
Necessity's sharp pinch! Return with her?
Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took 215
Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg
To keep base life afoot. Return with her?
Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter
To this detested groom. [Points at Oswald.]

Gon. At your choice, sir. 220

Lear. I prithee, daughter, do not make me mad
I will not trouble thee, my child; farewell.
We'll no more meet, no more see one another.
But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
Or rather a disease that's in my flesh, 225
Which I must needs call mine. Thou art a boil,
A plague sore, an embossed carbuncle

In my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide thee
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it.
I do not bid the Thunder-bearer shoot 230
Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove.
Mend when thou canst; be better at thy leisure;
I can be patient, I can stay with Regan,
I and my hundred knights

Reg. Not altogether so.

I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided 235
For your fit welcome. Give ear, sir, to my sister;
For those that mingle reason with your passion
Must be content to think you old, and so—
But she knows what she does.

Lear. Is this well spoken?

Reg. I dare avouch it, sir. What, fifty followers? 240
Is it not well? What should you need of more?
Yea, or so many, sith that both charge and danger
Speak 'gainst so great a number? How, in one house
Should many people, under two commands,
Hold amity? 'Tis hard; almost impossible. 245

Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance
From those that she calls servants, or from mine?

Reg. Why not, my lord? If then they chanc'd to slack ye,
We could control them. If you will come to me
(For now I spy a danger), I entreat you 250
To bring but five-and-twenty. To no more
Will I give place or notice.

Lear. I gave you all—

Reg. And in good time you gave it!

Lear. Made you my guardians, my depositaries;
But kept a reservation to be followed 255
With such a number. What, must I come to you
With five-and-twenty, Regan? Said you so?

Reg. And speak't again, my lord. No more with me.

Lear. Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favour'd
When others are more wicked; not being the worst 260
Stands in some rank of praise. [*To Goneril*] I'll go with thee.
Thy fifty yet doth double five-and-twenty,
And thou art twice her love.

Gon. Hear me, my lord.
What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house where twice so many 265
Have a command to tend you?

Reg. What need one?

Lear. O, reason not the need! Our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous.
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life is cheap as beast's. Thou art a lady: 270
If only to go warm were gorgeous,
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But, for true need—
You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!
You see me here, you gods, a poor old man, 275
As full of grief as age; wretched in both.
If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger,
And let not women's weapons, water drops, 280
Stain my man's cheeks! No, you unnatural hags!
I will have such revenges on you both
That all the world shall—I will do such things—
What they are yet, I know not; but they shall be
The terrors of the earth! You think I'll weep. 285
No, I'll not weep.

I have full cause of weeping, but this heart
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws

Or ere I'll weep. O fool, I shall go mad!

Exeunt Lear, Gloucester, Kent, and Fool. Storm and tempest.

Corn. Let us withdraw; 'twill be a storm. 290

Reg. This house is little; the old man and 's people
Cannot be well bestow'd.

Gon. 'Tis his own blame; hath put himself from rest
And must needs taste his folly.

Reg. For his particular, I'll receive him gladly, 295
But not one follower

Gon. So am I purpos'd.
Where is my Lord of Gloucester?

Corn. Followed the old man forth.

Enter Gloucester.

He is return'd.

Glou. The King is in high rage.

Corn. Whither is he going?

Glou. He calls to horse, but will I know not whither. 300

Corn. 'Tis best to give him way; he leads himself.

Gon. My lord, entreat him by no means to stay.

Glou. Alack, the night comes on, and the bleak winds
Do sorely ruffle. For many miles about
There's scarce a bush.

Reg. O, sir, to wilful men 305
The injuries that they themselves procure
Must be their schoolmasters. Shut up your doors.
He is attended with a desperate train,
And what they may incense him to, being apt
To have his ear abus'd, wisdom bids fear. 310

Corn. Shut up your doors, my lord; 'tis a wild night.
My Regan counsels well. Come out o' th' storm.

[Exeunt.]

Storm still. Enter *Kent* and a *Gentleman* at several doors

Kent. Who's there, besides foul weather ?

Gent. One minded like the weather, most unquietly.

Kent. I know you. Where's the King ?

Gent. Contending with the fretful elements ;

Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea, 5

Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main, '

That things might change or cease ; tears his white hair,

Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,

Catch in their fury and make nothing of ;

Strives in his little world of man to outscorn 10

The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.

This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch,

The lion and the belly-pinched wolf

Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,

And bids what will take all.

Kent. But who is with him ? 15

Gent. None but the fool, who labours to outjest
His heart-struck injuries.

Kent. Sir, I do know you,

And dare upon the warrant of my note

Commend a dear thing to you. There is division

(Although as yet the face of it be cover'd 20

With mutual cunning) 'twixt Albany and Cornwall ;

Who have (as who have not, that their great stars

Thron'd and set high ?) servants, who seem no less,

Which are to France the spies and speculations

Intelligent of our state. What hath been seen, 25

Either in snuffs and packings of the Dukes,

Or the hard rein which both of them have borne

Against the old kind King, or something deeper,

Whereof, perchance, these are but furnishings—
But, true it is, from France there comes a power 30
Into this scattered kingdom, who already,
Wise in our negligence, have secret feet
In some of our best ports and are at point
To show their open banner. Now to you :
If on my credit you dare build so far 35
To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
Some that will thank you, making just report
Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow •
The King hath cause to plain.
I am a gentleman of blood and breeding, 40
And from some knowledge and assurance offer
This office to you.

Gent. I will talk further with you

Kent. No, do not.

For confirmation that I am much more
Than my out-wall, open this purse and take 45
What it contains. If you shall see Cordelia
(As fear not but you shall), show her this ring,
And she will tell you who your fellow is •
That yet you do not know Fie on this storm !
I will go seek the King 50

Gent. Give me your hand. Have you no more to say ?

Kent. Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet :
That, when we have found the King (in which your pain
That way, I'll this), he that first lights on him
Holla the other.

Exeunt [severally].

Scene II. [*Another part of the heath.*]*Storm still. Enter Lear and Fool.*

Lear. Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
You sulph'rous and thought-executing fires,
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts, 5
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
Strike flat the thick rotundity o' th' world,
Crack Nature's moulds, all germains spill at once,
That make ingrateful man! 9

Fool. O nuncle, court holy water in a dry house is better
than this rain water out o' door. Good nuncle, in, and ask thy
daughters blessing! Here's a night pities neither wise men nor
fools.

Lear. Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire are my daughters. 15
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness.
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
You owe me no subscription. Then let fall
Your horrible pleasure. Here I stand your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man. 20
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That will with two pernicious daughters join
Your high-engender'd battles 'gainst a head
So old and white as this! O! O! 'tis foul!

Fool. He that has a house to put 's head in has a good head-
piece. 26

The codpiece that will house
Before the head has any,

The head and he shall louse :
So beggars marry many. 30
The man that makes his toe
What he his heart should make
Shall of a corn cry woe,
And turn his sleep to wake.

For these was never yet fair woman but she made mouths in
a glass. 36

Enter *Kent*.

Lear. No, I will be the pattern of all patience;
I will say nothing.

Kent. Who's there?

Fool. Marry, here's grace and a codpiece; that's a wise man
and a fool. 41

Kent. Alas, sir, are you here? Things that love night
Love not such nights as these. The wrathful skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark
And make them keep their caves. Since I was man, 45
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
Remember to have heard. Man's nature cannot carry
Th' affliction nor the fear.

Lear. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pudder o'er our heads, 50
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes
Unwhipp'd of justice. Hide thee, thou bloody hand;
Thou perjur'd, and thou simular man of virtue
That art incestuous. Catiff, in pieces shake 55
That under covert and convenient seeming
Hast practis'd on man's life. Close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents, and cry

These dreadful summoners grace. I am a man
More sinn'd against than sinning.

Kent. Alack, bareheaded? 60

Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest.
Repose you there, whilst I to this hard house
(More harder than the stones whereof 'tis rais'd,
Which even but now, demanding after you, 65
Denied me to come in) return, and force
Their scantred courtesy.

Lear. My wits begin to turn.

Come on, my boy. How dost, my boy? Art cold?
I am cold myself. Where is this straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange, 70
That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.
Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
That's sorry yet for thee.

Fool. [*sings*]

He that has and a little tiny wit—
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain— 75
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
For the rain it raineth every day

Lear. True, my good boy. Come, bring us to this hovel.

Exeunt [*Lear and Kent*].

Fool. This is a brave night to cool a courtesan. I'll speak a
prophecy ere I go: 80

When priests are more in word than matter;
When brewers mar their malt with water;
When nobles are their tailors' tutors,
No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors;
When every case in law is right, 85
No squire in debt nor no poor knight:

When slanders do not live in tongues,
Nor cutpurses come not to throngs;
When usurers tell their gold i' th' field,
And bawds and whores do churches build: 90
Then shall the realm of Albion
Come to great confusion
• Then comes the time, who lives to see't,
That going shall be us'd with feet.

This prophecy Merlin shall make, for I live before his time.

Exit.

Scene III [Gloucester's Castle.]

Enter Gloucester and Edmund

Glou. Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing! When I desir'd their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house, charg'd me on pain of perpetual displeasure neither to speak of him, entreat for him, nor any way sustain him. 6

Edm. Most savage and unnatural! •

Glou. Go to; say you nothing. There is division betwixt the Dukes, and a worse matter than that. I have received a letter this night—'tis dangerous to be spoken—I have lock'd the letter in my closet. These injuries the King now bears will be revenged home; there's part of a power already footed; we must incline to the King. I will seek him and privily relieve him. Go you and maintain talk with the Duke, that my charity be not of him perceived. If he ask for me, I am ill and gone to bed. Though I die for't, as no less is threat'ned me, the King my old master must be relieved. There is some strange thing toward, Edmund. Pray you be careful. *Exit*

Edm. This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the Duke 22

Instantly know, and of that letter too.

This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me

That which my father loses—no less than all.

25

The younger rises when the old doth fall.

Exit.

Scene IV. [*The heath. Before a hovel.*]

Storm still. Enter Lear, Kent, and Fool.

Kent. Here is the place, my lord. Good my lord, enter.
The tyranny of the open night's too rough
For nature to endure.

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here

Lear. Wilt break my heart?

Kent. I had rather break mine own Good my lord, enter. 5

Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious storm
Invades us to the skin. So 'tis to thee;

But where the greater malady is fix'd,

The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'dst shun a bear;

But if thy flight lay toward the raging sea, 10

Thou'dst meet the bear i' th' mouth. When the mind's free,

The body's delicate. The tempest in my mind

Doth from my senses take all feeling else

Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude!

Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand 15

For lifting food to't? But I will punish home!

No, I will weep no more; In such a night

To shut me out! Pour on; I will endure.

In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril!

Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all! 20

O, that way madness lies; let me shun that!

No more of that.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Prithce go in thyself; seek thine own ease.

This tempest will not give me leave to ponder

On things would hurt me more. But I'll go in.

25

[*To the Fool*] In, boy; go first.—You houseless poverty—

Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.

Exit [Fool].

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,

That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,

How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,

30

Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you

From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en

Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;

Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,

That thou mayst shake the superflux to them

35

And show the heavens more just.

Edg. [within] Fathom and half, fathom and half! Poor Tom!

Enter Fool [from the hovel].

Fool. Come not in here, nuncle, here's a spirit. Help me, help me!

40

Kent. Give me thy hand. Who's there?

Fool. A spirit, a spirit! He says his name's poor Tom.

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i' th' straw? Come forth.

45

Enter Edgar [disguised as a madman].

Edg. Away! the foul fiend follows me! Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind. Humh! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.

Lear. Hast thou given all to thy two daughters, and art thou come to this?

50

Edg. Who gives anything to poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, through ford and whirlpool, o'er bog and quagmire, that hath laid knives under his pillow and halters in his pew, set ratsbane by his porridge, made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting horse over four-inch'd bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor. Bless thy five wits! Tom's acold. O, do de, do de, do de. Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking! Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes. There could I have him now—and there—and there again—and there!

Storm still.

Lear. What, have his daughters brought him to this pass? Couldst thou save nothing? Didst thou give 'em all?

Fool. Nay, he reserv'd a blanket, else we had been all sham'd.

Lear. Now all the plagues that in the pendulous air
Hang fated o'er men's faults light on thy daughters! 70

Kent. He hath no daughters, sir.

Lear. Death, traitor! nothing could have subdu'd nature
To such a lowness but his unkind daughters.
Is it the fashion that discarded fathers

Should have thus little mercy on their flesh? 75

Judicious punishment! 'Twas this flesh begot
Those pelican daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat on Pillicock's Hill 'Allow, 'allow, loo, loo!

Fool. This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

Edg. Take heed o' th' foul fiend; obey thy parents;
keep thy word justly; swear not; commit not with man's
sworn spouse; set not thy sweet heart on proud array. Tom's
acold. 85

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edg. A servingman, proud in heart and mind; that curl'd
my hair, wore gloves in my cap; serv'd the lust of my mistress'

heart and did the act of darkness with her, swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven; one that slept in the contriving of lust, and wak'd to do it. Wine lov'd I deeply, dice dearly; and in woman out-paramour'd the Turk. False of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, tox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of silks betray thy poor heart to woman. Keep thy foot out of brothel, thy hand out of placket, thy pen from lender's book, and defy the foul fiend. Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind, says suum, mun, hey, no, nonny. Dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa! let him trot by.

104

Storm still.

Lear. Why, thou wert better in thy grave than to answer with thy uncover'd body this extremity of the skies. Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou ow'st the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! Here's three on's are sophisticated! Thou art the thing itself; unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings! Come, unbutton here.

114

[Tears at his clothes]

Fool. Prithce, nuncle, be contented! 'Tis a naughty night to swim in. Now a little fire in a wild field were like an old lecher's heart—a small spark, all the rest on's body cold. Look, here comes a walking fire

119

Enter Gloucester with a torch.

Edg. This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet. He begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock. He gives the web and the pin, squints the eye, and makes the harelip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creature of earth.

Saint Withold footed thrice the 'old, 125
He met the nightmare, and her nine fold;
 Bid her alight
 And her troth plight,
And aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!

Kent. How fares your Grace? 130

Lear. What's he?

Kent. Who's there? What is't you seek?

Glou. What are you there? Your names?

Edg. Poor Tom, that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the
todpole, the wall-newt and the water; that in the fury of his
heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets,
swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog, drinks the green mantle
of the standing pool; who is whipp'd from tithing to tithing,
and stock-punish'd and imprison'd; who hath had three suits
to his back, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon
to wear;

 But mice and rats, and such small deer,
Have been Tom's food for seven long year. 145

Beware my follower. Peace, Smulkin! peace, thou fiend!

Glou. What, hath your Grace no better company?

Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman!

Modo he's call'd, and Mahu.

Glou. Our flesh and blood is grown so vile, my lord, 150
That it doth hate what gets it.

Edg. Poor Tom's acold.

Glou. Go in with me. My duty cannot suffer
T' obey in all your daughters' hard commands.
Though their injunction be to bar my doors 155
And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you,
Yet have I ventur'd to come seek you out
And bring you where both fire and food is ready.

Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher.
What is the cause of thunder? 160

Kent. Good my lord, take his offer; go into th' house.

Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban.
What is your study?

Edg. How to prevent the fiend and to kill vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you one word in private. 165

Kent. Importune him once more to go, my lord.
His wits begin t' unsettle.

Glou. Canst thou blame him?

Storm still.

His daughters seek his death! Ah, that good Kent!
He said it would be thus—poor banish'd man!
Thou say'st the King grows mad: I'll tell thee, friend, 170
I am almost mad myself. I had a son,
Now outlaw'd from my blood. He sought my life
But lately, very late. I lov'd him, friend—
No father his son dearer. True to tell thee,
The grief hath craz'd my wits. What a night 's this! 175
I do beseech your Grace—

Lear. O, cry you mercy, sir.

Noble philosopher, your company.

Edg. Tom's acold.

Glou. In, fellow, there, into th' hovel; keep thee warm.

Lear. Come, let's in all.

Kent. This way, my lord.

Lear. With him! 180

I will keep still with my philosopher.

Kent. Good my lord, soothe him; let him take the fellow.

Glou. Take him you on.

Kent. Sirrah, come on; go along with us.

Lear. Come, good Athenian. 185

Glou. No words, no words! hush.

Edg Child Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still

Fie, foh, and fum!
I smell the blood of a British man

Exeunt.

Scene V. [Gloucester's Castle.]

Enter *Cornwall* and *Edmund*.

Corn. I will have my revenge ere I depart his house.

Edm. How, my lord, I may be censured, that nature thus
gives way to loyalty, something fears me to think of. 5

Corn. I now perceive it was not altogether your brother's
evil disposition made him seek his death; but a provoking
merit, set awork by a reproveable badness in himself. 9

Edm. How malicious is my fortune that I must repent to be
just! This is the letter he spoke of, which approves him an
intelligent party to the advantages of France. O heavens! that
this treason were not—or not I the detector! 15

Corn. Go with me to the Duchess.

Edm. If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty
business in hand. 16

Corn. True or false, it hath made thee Earl of Gloucester
Seek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our
apprehension. 20

Edm. [*aside*] If I find him comforting the King, it will stuff
his suspicion more fully.—I will persever in my course of
loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood

Corn. I will lay trust upon thee, and thou shalt find a dearer
father in my love.

Exeunt.

Scene VI. [*A farmhouse near Gloucester's Castle.*]

Enter Gloucester, Lear, Kent, Fool, and Edgar.

Glou. Here is better than the open air; take it thankfully. I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can. I will not be long from you.

Kent. All the power of his wits have given way to his impatience. The gods reward your kindness! 6

Exit [Gloucester]

Edg. Frateretto calls me, and tells me Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend

Fool. Prithce, nuncle, tell me whether a madman be a gentleman or a yeoman. 11

Lear. A king, a king!

Fool. No, he's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son; for he's a mad yeoman that sees his son a gentleman before him.

Lear. To have a thousand with red burning spits 16
Come hizzing in upon 'em—

Edg. The foul fiend bites my back.

Fool. He's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, or a whore's oath. 21

Lear. It shall be done; I will arraign them straight.

[*To Edgar*] Come, sit thou here, most learned justicer.

[*To the Fool*] Thou, sapient sir, sit here. Now, you she-foxes!

Edg. Look, where he stands and glares! Want'st thou eyes at trial, madam? 26

Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me.

Fool. Her boat hath a leak,
And she must not speak

Why she dares not come over to thee. 30

Edg. The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a

nightingale. Hoppedance cries in Tom's belly for two white herring. Croak not, black angel; I have no food for thee.

Kent. How do you, sir? Stand you not so amaz'd. 35
Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

Lear. I'll see their trial first. Bring in their evidence.
[*To Edgar*] Thou, robed man of justice, take thy place.
[*To the Fool*] And thou, his yokefellow of equity,
Bench by his side. [*To Kent*] You are o' th' commission, 40
Sit you too.

Edg. Let us deal justly.

Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?
Thy sheep be in the corn;
And for one blast of thy minikin mouth 45
Thy sheep shall take no harm.

Purr! the cat is gray.

Lear. Arraign her first. 'Tis Goneril. I here take my oath
before this honourable assembly, she kicked the poor King her
father. 50

Fool. Come hither, mistress. Is your name Goneril?

Lear. She cannot deny it.

Fool. Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool. 55

Lear. And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim
What store her heart is made on. Stop her there!
Arms, arms! sword! fire! Corruption in the place!
False justicer, why hast thou let her scape?

Edg. Bless thy five wits! 60

Kent. O pity! Sir, where is the patience now
That you so oft have boasted to retain?

Edg. [*aside*] My tears begin to take his part so much
They'll mar my counterfeiting.

Lear. The little dogs and all, 65
Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart, see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at them. Avaunt, you curs!

Be thy mouth or black or white,
Tooth that poisons if it bite; 70

Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,

Hound or spaniel, brach or lym,

Bobtail tyke or trundle-tail—

Tom will make them weep and wail;

For, with throwing thus my head, 75

Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.

Do de, de, de. Sessa! Come, march to wakes and fairs and
market towns. Poor Tom, thy horn is dry. 79

Lear. Then let them anatomize Regan. See what breeds
about her heart. Is there any cause in nature that makes these
hard hearts? [*To Edgar*] You, sir—I entertain you for one
of my hundred; only I do not like the fashion of your gar-
ments. You'll say they are Persian attire; but let them be
chang'd. 86

Kent. Now, good my lord, lie here, and rest awhile.

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise; draw the curtains.
So, so, so. We'll go to supper i' th' morning. So, so, so. 90

Fool. And I'll go to bed at noon.

Enter Gloucester.

Glou. Come hither, friend. Where is the King my master?

Kent. Here, sir; but trouble him not; his wits are gone.

Glou. Good friend, I prithee take him in thy arms.

I have o'erheard a plot of death upon him. 95

There is a litter ready; lay him in't

And drive towards Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet

Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master.

If thou shouldst dally half an hour, his life,

With thine, and all that offer to defend him, 100

Stand in assured loss. Take up, take up!

And follow me, that will to some provision
Give thee quick conduct.

Kent.

Oppressed nature sleeps.

This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken senses,
Which, if convenience will not allow; 105
Stand in hard cure. [*To the Fool*] Come, help to bear thy
master

Thou must not stay behind.

Glou.

Come, come, away!

Exeunt [all but Edgar].

Edg. When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
Who alone suffers suffers most i' th' mind, 110
Leaving free things and happy shows behind;
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip
When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that which makes me bend makes the King bow, 115
He childed as I fathered! Tom, away!
Mark the high noises, and thyself bewray
When false opinion, whose wrong thought defiles thee,
In thy just proof repeals and reconciles thee.
What will hap more to-night, 'safe scape the King! 120
Lurk, lurk. [*Exit*]

Scene VII. [*Gloucester's Castle.*]

Enter *Cornwall, Regan, Goneril, [Edmund the]*
Bastard, and Servants.

Corn. [*to Goneril*] Post speedily to my lord your husband,
show him this letter. The army of France is landed.—Seek
out the traitor Gloucester.

[*Exeunt some of the Servants.*]

Reg. Hang him instantly.

Gon. Pluck out his eyes.

5

Corn. Leave him to my displeasure. Edmund, keep you our sister company. The revenges we are bound to take upon your traitorous father are not fit for your beholding. Advise the Duke where you are going, to a most festinate preparation. We are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister; farewell, my Lord of Gloucester.

Enter [*Oswald* the] *Steward*

How now? Where's the King?

Osw. My Lord of Gloucester hath convey'd him hence. 15
Some five or six and thirty of his knights,
Hot questrists after him, met him at gate;
Who, with some other of the lord's dependants,
Are gone with him towards Dover, where they boast
To have well-armed friends.

Corn. Get horses for your mistress. 20

Gon. Farewell, sweet lord, and sister

Corn. Edmund, farewell.

Exeunt Goneril, [Edmund, and Oswald].

Go seek the traitor Gloucester,

Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us

[*Exeunt other Servants.*]

Though well we may not pass upon his life
Without the form of justice, yet our power 25
Shall do a court'sy to our wſath, which men
May blame, but not control.

Enter *Gloucester*, brought in by two or three.

Who's there? the traitor?

Reg. Ingrateful fox! 'tis he.

Corn. Bind fast his corky arms.

Glou. What mean your Graces? Good my friends, consider
You are my guests Do me no foul play, friends. 31

Corn. Bind him, I say

[*Servants bind him.*]

Reg. Hard, hard. O filthy traitor!

Glou. Unmerciful lady as you are, I am none.

Corn. To this chair bind him. Villain, thou shalt find—

[*Regan plucks his beard.*]

Glou. By the kind gods, 'tis most ignobly done 35
To pluck me by the beard.

Reg. So white, and such a traitor!

Glou. Naughty lady,

These hairs which thou dost ravish from my chin

Will quicken, and accuse thee. I am your host.

With robber's hands my hospitable favours 40

You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?

Corn. Come, sir, what letters had you late from France?

Reg. Be simple-answer'd, for we know the truth.

Corn. And what confederacy have you with the traitors
Late footed in the kingdom? 45

Reg. To whose hands have you sent the lunatic King?
Speak.

Glou. I have a letter guessingly set down,
Which came from one that's of a neutral heart,
And not from one oppos'd.

Corn. Cunning.

Reg. And false.

Corn. Where hast thou sent the King? 50

Glou. To Dover.

Reg. Wherefore to Dover? Wast thou not charg'd at
peril—

Corn. Wherefore to Dover? Let him first answer that.

Glou. I am tied to th' stake, and I must stand the course.

Reg. Wherefore to Dover, sir? 55

Glou. Because I would not see thy cruel nails

Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister

In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.

The sea, with such a storm as his bare head

In hell, black night endur'd, would have buoy'd up 60

And quench'd the stelled fires.

Yet, poor old heart, he help the heavens to rain.

If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that stern time,

Thou shouldst have said, 'Good porter, turn the key.'

All cruels else subscrib'd. But I shall see 65

The winged vengeance overtake such children.

Corn. See't shalt thou never. Fellows, hold the chair.

Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot.

Glou. He that will think to live till he be old,

Give me some help!—O cruel! O ye gods! 70

Reg. One side will mock another. Th' other too!

Corn. If you see vengeance—

1. Serv. Hold your hand, my lord!

I have serv'd you ever since I was a child;

But better service have I never done you

Than now to bid you hold.

Reg. How now, you dog? 75

1. Serv. If you did wear a beard upon your chin,
I'd shake it on this quarrel.

Reg. What do you mean?

Corn. My villain! *Draw and fight.*

1. Serv. Nay, then, come on, and take the chance of anger.

Reg. Give me thy sword. A peasant stand up thus? 80

She takes a sword and runs at him behind.

1. Serv. O, I am slain! My lord, you have one eye left
To see some mischief on him. O! *He dies.*

Corn. Lest it see more, prevent it. Out, vile jelly!
Where is thy lustre now?

Glou. All dark and comfortless! Where's my son Edmund?
85

Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature
To quit this horrid act

Reg. Out, treacherous villain!
Thou call'st on him that hates thee. It was he
That made the overture of thy treasons to us;
Who is too good to pity thee.
90

Glou. O my follies! Then Edgar was abus'd.
Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!

Reg. Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
His way to Dover.

Exit [one] with Gloucester.

How is't, my lord? How look you?

Corn. I have receiv'd a hurt. Follow me, lady.
95
Turn out that eyeless villain. Throw this slave
Upon the dunghill. Regan, I bleed apace.
Untimely comes this hurt. Give me your arm.

Exit [Cornwall, led by Regan].

2. *Serv.* I'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man come to good.

3. *Serv.* If she live long,
100
And in the end meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.

2. *Serv.* Let's follow the old Earl, and get the bedlam
To lead him where he would. His roguish madness
Allows itself to anything.
105

3. *Serv.* Go thou I'll fetch some flax and whites of eggs
To apply to his bleeding face. Now heaven help him!

Excunt.

Enter *Edgar*.

Edg. Yet better thus, and known to be condemn'd,
Than still condemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear.
The lamentable change is from the best; 5
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome then,
Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace!
The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst
Owes nothing to thy blasts.

Enter *Gloucester*, led by an *Old Man*.

But who comes here?
My father, poorly led? World, world, O world! 10
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age.

Old Man. O my good lord,
I have been your tenant, and your father's tenant,
These fourscore years.

Glou. Away, get thee away! Good friend, be gone. 15
Thy comforts can do me no good at all;
Thee they may hurt.

Old Man. You cannot see your way.

Glou. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;
I stumbled when I saw. Full oft 'tis seen
Our means secure us, and our mere defects 20
Prove our commodities. Ah dear son Edgar,
The food of thy abused father's wrath!
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'd say I had eyes again!

Old Man. How now? Who's there?

Edg. [aside] O gods! Who is't can say 'I am at the worst'?
I am worse than e'er I was.

Old Man. 'Tis poor mad Tom. 26

Edg. [aside] And worse I may be yet. The worst is not
So long as we can say 'This is the worst.'

Old Man. Fellow, where goest?

Glou. Is it a beggarman?

Old Man. Madman and beggar too. 30

Glou. He has some reason, else he could not beg.

I th' last night's storm I such a fellow saw,
Which made me think a man a worm. My son
Came then into my mind, and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him. I have heard more since.
As flies to wanton boys are we to th' gods 36
They kill us for their sport.

Edg. [aside] How should this be?
Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,
Ang'ring itself and others.—Bless thee, master!

Glou. Is that the naked fellow?

Old Man. Ay, my lord. 40

Glou. Then prithce get thee gone. If for my sake
Thou wilt o'ertake us hence a mile or twain
I th' way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;
And bring some covering for this naked soul,
Who I'll entreat to lead me.

Old Man. Alack, sir, he is mad! 45

Glou. 'Tis the time's plague when madmen lead the blind.
Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure.
Above the rest, be gone.

Old Man. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on't what will. *Exit.*

Glou. Sirrah naked fellow— 51

Edg. Poor Tom's acold. [Aside] I cannot daub it further.

Glou. Come hither², fellow.

Edg. [*aside*] And yet I must.—Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed.

Glou. Know'st thou the way to Dover? 55

Edg. Both stile and gate, horseway and footpath. Poor Tom hath been scar'd out of his good wits. Bless thee, good man's son, from the foul fiend! Five fiends have been in poor Tom at once: of lust, as Obidicut; Hobbididence, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of stealing; Modo, of murder; Flibbertigibbet, of mopping and mowing, who since possesses chambermaids and waiting women. So, bless thee, master!

Glou. Here, take this purse, thou whom the heavens' plagues 65

Have humbled to all strokes. That I am wretched
Makes thee the happier. Heavens, deal so still!

Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he does not feel, feel your pow'r quickly; 70
So distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough. Dost thou know Dover?

Edg. Ay, master.

Glou. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head
Looks fearfully in the confined deep. 75
Bring me but to the very brim of it,
And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear
With something rich about me. From that place
I shall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy arm.

Poor Tom shall lead thee.

80

Exeunt.

Scene II. [*Before the Duke of Albany's Palace.*]

Enter *Goneril* and [*Edmund* the] *Bastard*.

Gon. Welcome, my lord. I marvel our mild husband
Not met us on the way

Enter [*Oswald* the] *Steward*.

Now, where's your master?

Osw. Madam, within, but never man so chang'd.
I told him of the army that was landed
He smil'd at it. I told him you were coming 5
His answer was, 'The worse.' Of Gloucester's treachery
And of the loyal service of his son
When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot
And told me I had turn'd the wrong side out.
What most he should dislike seems pleasant to him; 10
What like, offensive.

Gon. [*to Edmund*] Then shall you go no further.
It is the cowish terror of his spirit,
That dares not undertake He'll not feel wrongs
Which tie him to an answer. Our wishes on the way
May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother. 15
Hasten his musters and conduct his pow'rs.
I must change arms at home and give the distaff
Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
Shall pass between us. Ere long you are like to hear
(If you dare venture in your own behalf) 20
A mistress's command. Wear this. [*Gives a favour.*]

Spare speech.

Decline your head. This kiss, if it durst speak,
Would stretch thy spirits up into the air.
Conceive, and fare thee well.

Edm. Yours in the ranks of death! *Exit.*

Gon. My most dear Gloucester! 25
O, the difference of man and man!
To thee a woman's services are due;
My fool usurps my body.

Osw. Madam, here comes my lord. *Exit.*

Enter *Albany*

Gon. I have been worth the whistle.

Alb. O General,
You are not worth the dust which the rude wind 30
Blows in your face! I fear your disposition.
That nature which contemns its origin
Cannot be bordered certain in itself.
She that herself will sliver and disbranch
From her material sap, perforce must wither 35
And come to deadly use.

Gon. No more! The text is foolish.

Alb. Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile;
Filth savour but themselves What have you done?
Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd? 40
A father, and a gracious aged man,
Whose reverence even the headlugg'd bear would lick,
Most barbarous, most degenerate, have you madded.
Could my good brother suffer you to do it?
A man, a prince, by him so benefited! 45
If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,
It will come,
Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
Like monsters of the deep.

Gon. Milk-liver'd man! 50
That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs;

Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
Thine honour from thy suffering, that not know'st
Fools do those villains pity who are punish'd
Ere they have done their mischief. Where's thy drum? 55
France spreads his banners in our noiseless land,
With plumed helm thy state begins to threat,
Whiles thou, a moral fool, sit'st still, and criest
'Alack, why does he so?'

Alb. See thyself, devil!
Proper deformity seems not in the fiend 60
So horrid as in woman.

Gon. O vain fool!
Alb. Thou changed and self-cover'd thing, for shame!
Bemaster not thy feature! Were't my fitness
To let these hands obey my blood,
They are apt enough to dislocate and tear 65
Thy flesh and bones. Howe'er thou art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield thee.

Gon. Marry, your manhood mew!

Enter a Gentleman.

Alb. What news?

Gent. O, my good lord, the Duke of Cornwall's dead, 70
Slain by his servant, going to put out
The other eye of Gloucester.

Alb. Gloucester's eyes?

Gent. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,
Oppos'd against the act, bending his sword
To his great master; who, thereat enrag'd, 75
Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead;
But not without that harmful stroke which since
Hath pluck'd him after.

Alb. This shows you are above,

You justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge! But O poor Gloucester!
Lost he his other eye? 83

Gent. Both, both, my lord.
This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer.
'Tis from your sister.

Gon. [*aside*] One way I like this well;
But being widow, and my Gloucester with her,
May all the building in my fancy pluck 85
Upon my hateful life. Another way
The news is not so tart.—I'll read, and answer.

Exit.

Alb. Where was his son when they did take his eyes?

Gent. Come with my lady hither.

Alb. He is not here.

Gent. No, my good lord; I met him back again. 90

Alb. Knows he the wickedness?

Gent. Ay, my good lord. 'Twas he inform'd against him,
And quit the house on purpose, that their punishment
Might have the freer course.

Alb. Gloucester, I live
To thank thee for the love thou show'dst the King, 95
And to revenge thine eyes. Come hither, friend.
Tell me what more thou know'st.

Exeunt.

[Scene III. *The French camp near Dover.*]

Enter *Kent* and a *Gentleman*.

Kent. Why the King of France is so suddenly gone back
know you the reason?

Gent. Something he left imperfect in the state, which since

his coming forth is thought of, which imports to the kingdom so much fear and danger that his personal return was most required and necessary.

Kent. Who hath he left behind him general?

Gent. The Marshal of France, Monsieur La Far. 10

Kent. Did your letters pierce the Queen to any demonstration of grief?

Gent. Ay, sir. She took them, read them in my presence,
And now and then an ample tear trill'd down
Her delicate cheek. It seem'd she was a queen 15
Over her passion, who, most rebel-like,
Sought to be king o'er her.

Kent. O, then it mov'd her?

Gent. Not to a rage. Patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears 20
Were like, a better way. Those happy smilets
That play'd on her ripe lip seem'd not to know
What guests were in her eyes, which parted thence
As pearls from diamonds dropp'd. In brief,
Sorrow would be a rarity most lov'd, 25
If all could so become it.

Kent. Made she no verbal question?

Gent. Faith, once or twice she heav'd the name of father
Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart;
Cried 'Sisters, sisters! Shame of ladies! Sisters!
Kent! father! sisters! What, i' th' storm? i' th' night? 30
Let pity not be believ'd!' There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
And clamour moisten'd. Then away she started
To deal with grief alone.

Kent. It is the stars,
The stars above us, govern our conditions; 35

Else one self mate and mate could not beget
Such different issues. You spoke not with her since?

Gent. No.

Kent. Was this before the King return'd?

Gent. No, since.

Kent. Well, sir, the poor distressed Lear's i' th' town; 40
Who sometime, in his better tune, remembers
What we are come about, and by no means
Will yield to see his daughter.

Gent. Why, good sir?

Kent. A sovereign shame so elbows him; his own unkind-
ness,
That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her 45
To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
To his dog-hearted daughters—these things sting
His mind so venomously that burning shame
Detains him from Cordelia.

Gent. Alack, poor gentleman!

Kent. Of Albany's and Cornwall's powers you heard not?

Gent. 'Tis so; they are afoot. 51

Kent. Well, sir, I'll bring you to our master Lear
And leave you to attend him. Some dear cause
Will in concealment wrap me up awhile.
When I am known aright, you shall not grieve 55
Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you go
Along with me. *Exeunt.*

Scene [IV *The French camp.*]

Enter, with *Drum* and *Colours*, *Cordelia*, *Doctor*, and *Soldiers*.

Cor. Alack, 'tis he! Why, he was met even now
As mad as the vex'd sea, singing aloud,

Crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow-weeds,
With hardocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flow'rs,
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow 5
In our sustaining corn. A century send forth.
Search every acre in the high-grown field
And bring him to our eye. [*Exit an Officer.*] What can man's
wisdom

In the restoring his bereaved sense?
He that helps him take all my outward worth 10

Doct. There is means, madam.

Our foster nurse of nature is repose,
The which he lacks. That to provoke in him
Are many simples operative, whose power
Will close the eye of anguish.

Cor. All blest secrets, 15
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears! be aidant and remediate
In the good man's distress! Seek, seek for him!
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
That wants the means to lead it.

Enter Messenger.

Mess. News, madam. 20
The British pow'rs are marching hitherward.

Cor. 'Tis known before. Our preparation stands
In expectation of them. O dear father,
It is thy business that I go about.
Therefore great France 25

My mourning and important tears hath pitied.
No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
But love, dear love, and our ag'd father's right.
Soon may I hear and see him!

Exeunt.

Scene [V. Gloucester's Castle.⁹]

Enter *Regan* and [*Oswald* the] *Steward*.

Reg. But are my brother's pow'rs set forth?

Osw. Ay, madam.

Reg. Himself in person there?

Osw. Madam, with much ado.

Your sister is the better soldier

Reg. Lord Edmund spake not with your lord at home?

Osw. No, madam. 5

Reg. What might import my sister's letter to him?

Osw. I know not, lady.

Reg. Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.

It was great ignorance, Gloucester's eyes being out,

To let him live. Where he arrives he moves 10

All hearts against us. Edmund, I think, is gone,

In pity of his misery, to dispatch

His nighted life; moreover, to descry

The strength o'th' enemy

Osw. I must needs after him, madam, with my letter. 15

Reg. Our troops set forth to-morrow Stay with us.

The ways are dangerous.

Osw. I may not, madam.

My lady charg'd my duty in this business.

Reg. Why should she write to Edmund? Might not
you

Transport her purposes by word? Belike, 20

Something—I know not what—I'll love thee much—

Let me unseal the letter.

Osw. Madam, I had rather—

Reg. I know your lady does not love her husband;
I am sure of that, and at her late being here

She gave strange eliads and most speakin'g looks 25
To noble Edmund. I know you are of her 'bosom.

Osw. I, madam?

Reg. I speak in understanding. Y'are! I know't.
Therefore I do advise you take this note.
My lord is dead; Edmund and I have talk'd, 30
And more convenient is he for my hand
Than for your lady's. You may gather more.
If you do find him, pray you give him this;
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray desire her call her wisdom to her. 35
So farewell

If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.

Osw. Would I could meet him, madam! I should show 39
What party I do follow

Reg. Fare thee well. *Exeunt.*

Scene [VI. *The country near Dover.*]

Enter *Gloucester*, and *Edgar* [like a *Peasant*].

Glou. When shall I come to-th' top of that same hill?

Edg. You do climb up it now. Look how we labour.

Glou. Methinks the ground is even.

Edg. Horrible steep.

Hark, do you hear the sea?

Glou. No, truly.

Edg. Why, then, your other senses grow imperfect 5
By your eyes' anguish.

Glou. So may it be indeed.

Methinks thy voice is alter'd, and thou speak'st
In better phrase and matter than thou didst.

Edg. Y^eare much deceiv'd. In nothing am I chang'd
But in my garments.

Glou. Methinks y^eare better spoken. 10

Edg. Come on, sir; here's the place. Stand still. How
fearful

And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!
The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
Show scarce so gross as beetles. Halfway down
Hangs one that gathers sampire—dreadful trade! 15
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head.

The fishermen that walk upon the beach
Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring bark,
Diminish'd to her cock, her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight. The murmuring surge 20
That on th' unnumb'ed idle pebble chafes
Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more,
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong

Glou. Set me where you stand.

Edg. Give me your hand. You are now within a foot 25
Of th' extreme verge. For all beneath the moon
Would I not leap upright.

Glou. Let go my hand
Here, friend, 's another purse, in it a jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking. Fairies and gods
Prosper it with thee! Go thou further off; 30
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

Edg. Now fare ye well, good sir.

Glou. With all my heart.

Edg. [*aside*]. Why I do trifle thus with his despair
Is done to cure it.

Glou. O you mighty gods! *He kneels.*
This world I do renounce, and, in your sights, 35

Shake patiently my great affliction off.
If I could bear it longer and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff and loathed part of nature should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O, bless him! 40
Now, fellow, fare thee well. *He falls [forward and swoons].*

Edg. Gone, sir, farewell.—

And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life when life itself
Yields to the theft. Had he been where he thought,
By this had thought been past.—Alive or dead? 45
Ho you, sir! friend! Hear you, sir? Speak!—
Thus might he pass indeed. Yet he revives.
What are you, sir?

Glou. Away, and let me die.

Edg. Hadst thou been aught but gossamer, feathers, air,
So many fadom down precipitating, 50
Thou'dst shiver'd like an egg; but thou dost breathe;
Hast heavy substance; bleed'st not, speak'st; art sound.
Ten masts at each make not the altitude
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell.
Thy life's a miracle. Speak yet again. 55

Glou. But have I fall'n, or no?

Edg. From the dread summit of this chalky bourn.
Look up a-height. The shrill-gorg'd lark so far
Cannot be seen or heard. Do but look up.

Glou. Alack, I have no eyes! 60

Is wretchedness depriv'd that benefit
To end itself by death? 'Twas yet some comfort
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage
And frustrate his proud will.

Edg. Give me your arm.

Up—so. How is't? Feel you your legs? You stand. 65

Glou. Too well, too well.

Edg. This is above all strangeness.
Upon the crown o' th' cliff what thing was that
Which parted from you ?

Glou. A poor unfortunate beggar.

Edg. As I stood here below, methought his eyes
Were two full moons, he had a thousand noses, 70
Horns whelk'd and wav'd like the enridged sea.
It was some fiend. Therefore, thou happy father,
Think that the clearest gods, who make them honours
Of men's impossibilities, have preserv'd thee.

Glou. I do remember now. Henceforth I'll bear 75
Affliction till it do cry out itself
'Enough, enough,' and die. That thing you speak of,
I took it for a man. Often 'twould say
'The fiend, the fiend'—he led me to that place

Edg. Bear free and patient thoughts.

Enter *Lear*, mad, [fantastically dressed with weeds].

But who comes here ? 80
The safer sense will ne'er accommodate
His master thus

Lear. No, they cannot touch me for coming;
I am the King himself

Edg. O thou side-piercing sight ! 85

Lear. Nature's above art in that respect There's your press
money. That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper. Draw
me a clothier's yard. Look, look, a mouse ! Peace, peace ; this
piece of toasted cheese will do't. There's my gauntlet ; I'll
prove it on a giant. Bring up the brown bills. O, well flown,
bird' i' th' clout, i' th' clout ! Hewgh ! Give the word.

Edg. Sweet marjoram.

Lear. Pass. 95

Glou. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha! Goneril with a white beard? They flatter'd me like a dog, and told me I had white hairs in my beard ere the black ones were there. To say 'ay' and 'no' to everything I said! 'Ay' and 'no' too was no good divinity. When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter, when the thunder would not peace at my bidding, there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to, they are not men o' their words! They told me I was everything. 'Tis a lie—I am not ague-proof.

Glou. The trick of that voice I do well remember.
Is't not the King?

Lear. Ay, every inch a king!
When I do stare, see how the subject quakes. 110
I pardon that man's life. What was thy cause?
Adultery?
Thou shalt not die. Die for adultery? No.
The wren goes to't, and the small gilded fly
Does lecher in my sight. 115
Let copulation thrive; for Gloucester's bastard son
Was kinder to his father than my daughters
Got 'tween the lawful sheets
To't, luxury, pell-mell! for I lack soldiers.
Behold yond simp'ring dame, 120
Whose face between her forks presageth snow,
That minces virtue, and does shake the head
To hear of pleasure's name
The fitchew nor the soiled horse goes to't
With a more riotous appetite. 125
Down from the waist they are Centaurs,
Though women all above.
But to the girdle do the gods inherit,
Beneath is all the fiend's. 129

There's hell, there's darkness, there's the sulphurous pit; burning, scalding, stench, consumption. Fie, fie, fie! pah, pah! Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination. There's money for thee.

Glou. O, let me kiss that hand! 135

Lear. Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.

Glou. O ruin'd piece of nature! This great world
Shall so wear out to naught. Dost thou know me?

Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost thou squiny at me? No, do thy worst, blind Cupid! I'll not love. Read thou this challenge; mark but the penning of it. 142

Glou. Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.

Edg. [*aside*] I would not take this from report. It is,
And my heart breaks at it. 145

Lear. Read.

Glou. What, with the case of eyes?

Lear. O, ho, are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light. Yet you see how this world goes. 151

Glou. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What, art mad? A man may see how the world goes with no eyes. Look with thine ears. See how yond justice rails upon yond simple thief. Hark in thine ear. Change places and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief? Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

Glou. Ay, sir. 160

Lear. And the creature run from the cur? There thou might'st behold the great image of authority: a dog's obeyed in office.

Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand!

Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back. 165
Thou hotly luster to use her in that kind

For which thou whip'st her. The usurer hangs the cozener.

Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;
 Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,
 And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks; 170
 Arm it in rags, a pygmy's straw does pierce it.
 None does offend, none—I say none! I'll able 'em.
 Take that of me, my friend, who have the power
 To seal th' accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes
 And, like a scurvy politician, seem 175
 To see the things thou dost not. Now, now, 'now, now!
 Pull off my boots. Harder, harder! So.

Edg. O, matter and impertunency mix'd!
 Reason in madness!

Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes. 180
 I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloucester.
 Thou must be patient. We came crying hither;
 Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air
 We wawl and cry. I will preach to thee. Mark.

Glou. Alack, alack the day! 185

Lear. When we are born, we cry that we are come
 To this great stage of fools. This' a good block.
 It were a delicate stratagem to shoe
 A troop of horse with felt. I'll put't in proof,
 And when I have stol'n upon these sons-in-law, 190
 Then kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill!

Enter a Gentleman [with Attendants].

Gent. O, here he is! Lay hand upon him.—Sir,
 Your most dear daughter—

Lear. No rescue? What, a prisoner? I am even
 The natural fool of fortune. Use me well; 195
 You shall have ransom. Let me have a surgeon;
 I am cut to th' brains.

Gent. You shall have anything.

Lear. No seconds? All myself?
Why, this would make a man a man of salt,
To use his eyes for garden waterpots, 200
Ay, and laying autumn's dust.

Gent. Good sir—

Lear. I will die bravely, like a smug bridegroom. What!
I will be jovial. Come, come, I am a king,
My masters, know you that?

Gent. You are a royal one, and we obey you. 205

Lear. Then there's life in't. Nay, an you get it, you shall
get it by running. Sa, sa, sa, sa!

Exit running. [*Attendants follow.*]

Gent. A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch,
Past speaking of in a king! Thou hast one daughter
Who redeems nature from the general curse 210
Which twain have brought her to.

Edg. Hail, gentle sir

Gent. Sir, speed you. What's your will?

Edg. Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle toward?

Gent. Most sure and vulgar. Every one hears that
Which can distinguish sound.

Edg. But, by your favour, 215
How near's the other army?

Gent. Near and on speedy foot. The main descry
Stands on the hourly thought.

Edg. I thank you, sir. That's all

Gent. Though that the Queen on special cause is here,
Her army is mov'd on.

Edg. I thank you, sir. 220

Exit [*Gentleman*]

Glou. You ever-gentle gods, take my breath from me;
Let not my worser spirit tempt me again
To die before you please!

Edg. Well pray you, father.

Glou. Now, good sir, what are you?

Edg. A most poor man, made tame to fortune's blows, 225
Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand;
I'll lead you to some biding.

Glou. Hearty thanks.
The bounty and the benison of heaven
To boot, and boot!

Enter [*Oswald the*] *Steward*.

Osw. A proclaim'd prize! Most happy! 230
That eyeless head of thine was first fram'd flesh
To raise my fortunes. Thou old unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember. The sword is out
That must destroy thee.

Glou. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough to't.

[*Edgar interposes.*]

Osw. Wherefore, bold peasant, 235
Dar'st thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence!
Lest that th' infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.

Edg. Chill not let go, sir, without vurther 'cagion. 240

Osw. Let go, slave, or thou diest!

Edg. Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor voke pass.
An chud ha' bin zwagger'd out of my life, 'twould not ha' bin
zo long as 'tis by a vortnight. Nay, come not near th' old man.
Keep out, che vore ye, or Ise try whether your costard or my
balloŵ be the harder. Chill be plain with you.

Osw. Out, dunghill!

They fight.

Edg. Chill pick your teeth, sir. Come! No matter vor your
foins. 251

[*Oswald falls.*]

Osw. Slave, thou hast slain me. Villain, take my purse.
If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body,
And give the letters which thou find'st about me
To Edmund Earl of Gloucester. Seek him out 255
Upon the British party. O, untimely death! Death! *He dies.*

Edg. I know thee well. A serviceable villain,
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress
As badness would desire.

Glou. What, is he dead?

Edg. Sit you down, father; rest you. 260
Let's see his pockets, these letters that he speaks of
May be my friends. He's dead. I am only sorry
He had no other deathsman. Let us see.
Leave, gentle wax; and, manners, blame us not.
To know our enemies' minds, we'd rip their hearts; 265
Their papers, is more lawful. *Reads the letter.*

'Let our reciprocal vows be rememb'ed You have many oppor-
tunities to cut him off. If your will want not, time and place will be
fruitfully offer'd. There is nothing done, if he return the conqueror.
Then am I the prisoner, and he bed my jail; from the loathed
warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your labour
'Your (wife, so I would say) affectionate servant,

'GONERIL.'

O indistinguish'd space of woman's will!
A plot upon her virtuous husband's life,
And the exchange my brother! Here in the sands 280
Thee I'll rake up, the post unsanctified
Of murderous lechers; and in the mature time
With this ungracious paper strike the sight

Of the death-practis'd Duke. For him 'tis well
That of thy death and business I can tell. 285

Glou. The King is mad. How stiff is my vile sense,
That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract.
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,
And woes by wrong imaginations lose 290
The knowledge of themselves.

A drum afar off.

Edg. Give me your hand.
Far off methinks I hear the beaten drum.
Come, father, I'll bestow you with a friend *Exeunt.*

Scene VII. [*A tent in the French camp.*]

Enter Cordelia, Kent, Doctor, and Gentleman.

Cor. O thou good Kent, how shall I live and work
To match thy goodness? My life will be too short
And every measure fail me.

Kent. To be acknowledg'd, madam, is o'erpaid.
All my reports go with the modest truth; 5
Nor more nor clipp'd, but so.

Cor. Be better suited.
These weeds are memories of those worser hours.
I prithee put them off.

Kent. Pardon, dear madam.
Yet to be known shortens my made intent.
My boon I make it that you know me not 10
Till time and I think meet.

Cor. Then be't so, my good lord. [*To the Doctor*] How does
the King?

Doct. Madam, sleeps still.

Cor. O you kind gods,
Cure this great breach in his abused nature!
Th' untun'd and jarring senses, O, wind up
Of this child-changed father!
15

Doct. So please your Majesty
That we may wake the King? He hath slept long.

Cor. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
I' th' sway of your own will Is he array'd?
20

Enter *Lear* in a chair carried by *Servants*.

Gent. Ay, madam In the heaviness of sleep
We put fresh garments on him

Doct. Be by, good madam, when we do awake him.
I doubt not of his temperance

Cor. Very well.

[*Music.*]

Doct. Please you draw near. Louder the music there!
25

Cor. O my dear father, restoration hang
Thy medicine on my lips, and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made!

Kent. Kind and dear princess!

Cor. Had you not been their father, these white flakes
30.

Had challeng'd pity of them. Was this a face

To be oppos'd against the warring winds?

To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder?

In the most terrible and nimble stroke

Of quick cross lightning? To watch—poor perdu!—
35

With this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog,

Though he had bit me, should have stood that night

Against my fire; and wast thou fain, poor father,

To hovel thee with swine and rogues forlorn,

In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!
40

'Tis wonder that thy life and wits at once
Had not concluded all.—He wakes. Speak to him.

Doct. Madam, do you; 'tis fittest

Cor. How does my royal lord? How fares your Majesty?

Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o' th' grave. 45

Thou art a soul in bliss, but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead.

Cor. Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a spirit, I know. When did you die?

Cor. Still, still, far wide! 50

Doct. He's scarce awake. Let him alone awhile

Lear. Where have I been? Where am I? Fair daylight?

I am mightily abus'd. I should e'en die with pity,

To see another thus. I know not what to say.

I will not swear these are my hands. Let's see 55

I feel this pin prick. Would I were assur'd

Of my condition!

Cor. O, look upon me, sir,

And hold your hands in benediction o'er me.

No, sir, you must not kneel

Lear. Pray, do not mock me.

I am a very foolish fond old man, 60

Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less;

And, to deal plainly,

I fear I am not in my perfect mind.

Methinks I should know you, and know this man;

Yet I am doubtful; for I am mainly ignorant 65

What place this is; and all the skill I have

Remembers not these garments; nor I know not

Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me;

For (as I am a man) I think this lady

To be my child Cordelia.

Cor. And so I am ! I am ! 70

Lear. Be your tears wet ? Yes, faith. I pray weep not.

If you have poison for me, I will drink it.

I know you do not love me ; for your sisters

Have, as I do remember, done me wrong.

You have some cause, they have not.

Cor., No cause, no cause. 75

Lear. Am I in France ?

Kent. In your own kingdom, sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Doct. Be comforted, good madam. The great rage

You see is kill'd in him ; and yet it is danger

To make him even o'er the time he has lost. 90

Desire him to go in. Trouble him no more

Till further settling.

Cor. Will't please your Highness walk ?

Lear. You must bear with me.

Pray you now, forget and forgive. I am old and foolish.

Exeunt. Manent Kent and Gentleman

Gent. Holds it true, sir, that the Duke of Cornwall was so slain ? 86

Kent. Most certain, sir.

Gent. Who is conductor of his people ?

Kent. As 'tis said, the bastard son of Gloucester.

Gent. They say Edgar, his banish'd son, is with the Earl of Kent in Germany. 91

Kent. Report is changeable. 'Tis time to look about ; the powers of the kingdom approach apace.

Gent. The arbitrement is like to be bloody.

Fare you well, sir.

[Exit]

Kent. My point and period will be thoroughly wrought,

Or well or ill, as this day's battle's fought.

Exit

ACT V. Scene I. [*The British camp near Dover.*]

Enter, with *Drum* and *Colours*, *Edmund*, *Regan*, *Gentleman*,
and *Soldiers*.

Edm. Know of the Duke if his last purpose hold,
Or whether since he is advis'd by aught
To change the course. He's full of alteration
And self-reproving Bring his constant pleasure

[*Exit an Officer.*]

Reg. Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.

5

Edm. 'Tis to be doubted, madam.

Reg. Now, sweet lord,
You know the goodness I intend upon you.
Tell me—but truly—but then speak the truth—
Do you not love my sister?

Edm. In honour'd love.

Reg. But have you never found my brother's way
To the forfended place?

10

Edm. That thought abuses you.

Reg. I am doubtful that you have been conjunct
And bosom'd with her, as far as we call hers.

Edm. No, by mine honour, madam

Reg. I never shall endure her. Dear my lord,
Be not familiar with her.

15

Edm. Fear me not.
She and the Duke her husband!

Enter, with *Drum* and *Colours*, *Albany*, *Goneril*, *Soldiers*.

Gon. [*aside*] I had rather lose the battle than that sister
Should loosen him and me.

Alb. Our very loving sister, well bemet.

20

Sir, this I hear the King is come to his daughter,

With others whom the rigour of our state
Forc'd to cry out. Where I could not be honest,
I never yet was valiant. For this business,
It toucheth us as France invades our land, 25
Not bolds the King, with others whom, I fear,
Most just and heavy causes make oppose.

Edm. Sir, you speak nobly

Reg. Why is this reason'd?

Gon. Combine together 'gainst the enemy;
For these domestic and particular broils 30
Are not the question here.

Alb. Let's then determine
With th' ancient of war on our proceeding.

Edm. I shall attend you presently at your tent.

Reg. Sister, you'll go with us?

Gon. No. 35

Reg. 'Tis most convenient. Pray you go with us.

Gon. [*aside*] O, ho, I know the riddle.—I will go.

[As they are going out,] enter *Edgar* [*disguised*].

Edg. If e'er your Grace had speech with man so poor,
Hear me one word.

Alb. I'll overtake you.—Speak.

Exeunt [*all but Albany and Edgar*].

Edg. Before you fight the battle, ope this letter 40
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it. Wretched though I seem,
I can produce a champion that will prove
What is avouched there. If you miscarry,
Your business of the world hath so an end, 45
And machination ceases. Fortune love you!

Alb. Stay till I have read the letter.

Edg. I was forbid it.
When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
And I'll appear again.

Alb. Why, fare thee well. I will o'erlook thy paper. 50
Exit [Edgar].

Enter Edmund.

Edm. The enemy's in view; draw up your powers.
Here is the guess of their true strength and forces
By diligent discovery; but your haste
Is now urg'd on you.

Alb. We will greet the time. *Exit.*

Edm. To both these sisters have I sworn my love; 55
Each jealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take?
Both? one? or neither? Neither can be enjoy'd,
If both remain alive. To take the widow
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril; 60
And hardly shall I carry out my side,
Her husband being alive. Now then, we'll use
His countenance for the battle, which being done,
Let her who would be rid of him devise
His speedy taking off. As for the mercy 65
Which he intends to Lear and to Cordelia—
The battle done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon; for my state
Stands on me to defend, not to debate. *Exit.*

Scene II. ^o [*A field between the two camps*]

Alarum within. Enter, with *Drum* and *Colours*, the *Powers of France* over the stage, *Cordelia* with her *Father* in her hand,
and exeunt.

Enter *Edgar* and *Gloucester*.

Edg. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
For your good host. Pray that the right may thrive.
If ever I return to you again,
I'll bring you comfort.

Glou. Grace go with you, sir!

Exit [Edgar].

Alarum and retreat within. Enter *Edgar*.

Edg. Away, old man! give me thy hand! away! 5
King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en.
Give me thy hand! come on!

Glou. No further, sir. A man may rot even here.

Edg. What, in ill thoughts again? Men must endure 10
Their going hence, even as their coming hither;
Ripeness is all. Come on.

Glou. And that's true too. *Exeunt.*

Scene III. [*The British camp, near Dover.*]

Enter, in conquest, with *Drum* and *Colours*, *Edmund*; *Lear*
and *Cordelia* as prisoners; *Soldiers*, *Captain*.

Edm. Some officers take them away. Good guard
Until their greater pleasures first be known
That are to censure them.

Cor. We are not the first
 Who with best meaning have incurr'd the worst.
 For thee, oppressed king, am I cast down, 5
 Myself could else outfrown false Fortune's frown.
 Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?

Lear. No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison
 We two alone will sing like birds i' th' cage.
 When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down 10
 And ask of thee forgiveness. So we'll live,
 And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
 At gilded butterflies; and hear poor rogues
 Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too—
 Who loses and who wins, who's in, who's out— 15
 And take upon 's the mystery of things,
 As if we were God's spies, and we'll wear out,
 In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones
 That ebb and flow by th' moon

Edm. Take them away.

Lear. Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
 The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught thee? 20
 He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven
 And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine eyes
 The goodyears shall devour 'em, flesh and fell,
 Ere they shall make us weep! We'll see 'em starv'd first. 25
 Come.

Exeunt [Lear and Cordelia, guarded].

Edm. Come hither, Captain; hark.
 Take thou this note [*gives a paper*]. Go follow them to
 prison.

One step I have advanc'd thee. If thou dost
 As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
 To noble fortunes. Know thou this, that men 30
 Are as the time is To be tender-minded
 Does not become a sword. Thy great employment

Will not bear question. Either say thou'lt do't,
Or thrive by other means.

Capt. I'll do't, my lord.

Edm. About it! and write happy when th' hast done. 35
Mark—I say, instantly; and carry it so
As I have set it down.

Capt. I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats;
If it be man's work, I'll do't. *Exit.*

Flourish. Enter *Albany, Goneril, Regan, Soldiers*

Alb. Sir, you have show'd to-day your valiant strain, 40
And fortune led you well. You have the captives
Who were the opposites of this day's strife.
We do require them of you, so to use them
As we shall find their merits and our safety
May equally determine.

Edm. Sir, I thought it fit 45
To send the old and miserable King
To some retention and appointed guard;
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side
And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes 50
Which do command them. With him I sent the Queen,
My reason all the same; and they are ready
To-morrow, or at further space, t' appear
Where you shall hold your session. At this time
We sweat and bleed. the friend hath lost his friend; 55
And the best quarrels, in the heat, are curs'd
By those that feel their sharpness.
The question of Cordelia and her father
Requires a fitter place.

Alb. Sir, by your patience,

I hold you but a subject of this war, 60
Not as a brother.

Reg. That's as we list to grace him
Methinks our pleasure might have been demanded
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers,
Bore the commission of my place and person,
The which immediacy may well stand up 65
And call itself your brother.

Gon. Not so hot!
In his own grace he doth exalt himself
More than in your addition.

Reg. In my rights
By me invested, he compeers the best.

Gon. That were the most if he should husband you. 70

Reg. Jesters do oft prove prophets.

Gon. Holla, holla!
That eye that told you so look'd but asquint.

Reg. Lady, I am not well; else I should answer
From a full-flowing stomach. General,
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony; 75
Dispose of them, of me; the walls are thine.
Witness the world that I create thee here
My lord and master.

Gon. Mean you to enjoy him?

Alb. The let-alone lies not in your good will.

Edm. Nor in thine, lord.

Alb. Half-blooded fellow, yes. 80

Reg. [*to Edmund*] Let the drum strike, and prove my title
thine.

Alb. Stay yet; hear reason. Edmund, I arrest thee
On capital treason; and, in thine attain't,
This gilded serpent [*points to Goneril*]. For your claim, fair
sister,

I bar it in the interest² of my wife 85
'Tis she is subcontracted to this lord,
And I, her husband, contradict your banes.
If you will marry, make your loves to me;
My lady is bespoken.

Gon. An interlude!

Alb. Thou art arm'd, Gloucester. Let the trumpet sound.
If none appear to prove upon thy person 91
Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
There is my pledge [*throws down a glove*]! I'll prove it on
thy heart,

Ere I taste bread, thou art in² nothing less
Than I have here proclaim'd thee.

Reg. Sick, O, sick! 95

Gon. [*aside*] If not, I'll ne'er trust medicine

Edm. There's my exchange [*throws down a glove*]. What
in the world he is

That names me traitor, villain-like he lies.
Call by thy trumpet. He that dares approach,
On him, on you, who not? I will maintain 100
My truth and honour firmly.

Alb. A herald, ho!

Edm. A herald, ho, a herald!

Alb. Trust to thy single virtue; for thy soldiers,
All levied in my name, have in my name
Took their discharge.

Reg. My sickness grows upon me. 105

Alb. She is not well. Convey her to my tent.

[*Exit Regan, led.*]

Enter a *Herald*.

Come hither, herald. Let the trumpet sound,
And read out this.

Capt. Sound, trumpet!

A trumpet sounds.

**Her.* (*reads*) 'If any man of quality or degree within the lists of the army will maintain upon Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloucester, that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear by the third sound of the trumpet. He is bold in his defence.'

114

Edm. Sound!

First trumpet.

Her. Again!

Second trumpet.

Her. Again!

Third trumpet.

Trumpet answers within

Enter *Edgar*, armed, at the third sound, a *Trumpet* before him.

Alb. Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o' th' trumpet.

Her.

What are you?

Your name, your quality? and why you answer

120

This present summons?

Edg.

Know my name is lost;

By treason's tooth bare-gnawn and canker-bit.

Yet am I noble as the adversary

I come to cope.

Alb.

Which is that adversary?

124

Edg. What's he that speaks for Edmund Earl of Gloucester?

Edm. Himself. What say'st thou to him?

Edg.

Draw thy sword,

That, if my speech offend a noble heart,

Thy arm may do thee justice. Here is mine.

Behold, it is the privilege of mine honours,

My oath, and my profession. I protest—

130

Maugre thy strength, youth, place, and eminence,

Despite thy victor sword and fire-new fortune,

Thy valour and thy heart—thou art a traitor;

False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father;

Conspirant 'gaunst this high illustrious prince 135
And from th' extremest upward of thy head
To the descent and dust beneath thy foot,
A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou 'no,'
This sword, this arm, and my best spirits are bent
To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak, 140
Thou leest.

Edm. In wisdom I should ask thy name,
But since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that thy tongue some say of breeding breathes,
What safe and nicely I might well delay
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn. 145
Back do I toss those treasons to thy head;
With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart;
Which—for they yet glance by and scarcely bruise—
This sword of mine shall give them instant way
Where they shall rest for ever. Trumpets, speak! 150

Alarums. Fight. [Edmund falls]

Alb. Save him, save him!

Gon. This is mere practice, Gloucester.
By th' law of arms thou wast not bound to answer
An unknown opposite. Thou art not vanquish'd,
But cozen'd and beguil'd.

Alb. Shut your mouth, dame,
Or with this paper shall I stop it. [*Shows her her letter to*
Edmund.—[*To Edmund.*]. Hold, sir. 155
[*To Goneril.*] Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil.
No tearing, lady! I perceive you know it.

Gon. Say if I do—the laws are mine, not thine.
Who can arraign me for't?

Alb. Most monstrous!
Know'st thou this paper?

Gon. Ask me not what I know. *Exit.*

Alb. Go after her. She's desperate; govern her. 161
[Exit an Officer.]

Edm. What you have charg'd me with, that have I done,
And more, much more. The time will bring it out.
'Tis past, and so am I — But what art thou
That hast this fortune on me? If thou'rt noble, 165
I do forgive thee.

Edg. Let's exchange charity.
I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund;
If more, the more th' hast wrong'd me.
My name is Edgar and thy father's son.
The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices 170
Make instruments to scourge us.
The dark and vicious place where thee he got
Cost him his eyes.

Edm. Th' hast spoken right; 'tis true.
The wheel is come full circle; I am here.

Alb. Methought thy very gait did prophesy 175
A royal nobleness. I must embrace thee.
Let sorrow split my heart if ever I
Did hate thee, or thy father!

Edg. Worthy prince, I know't.

Alb. Where have you hid yourself?
How have you known the miseries of your father? 180

Edg. By nursing them, my lord. List a brief tale;
And when 'tis told, O that my heart would burst!
The bloody proclamation to escape
That follow'd me so near (O, our lives' sweetness!
That with the pain of death would hourly die 185
Rather than die at once!) taught me to shift
Into a madman's rags, t' assume a semblance
That very dogs disdain'd; and in this habit
Met I my father with his bleeding rings,

Their precious stones new lost, became his guide,
Led him, begg'd for him, sav'd him from despair;
Never (O fault!) reveal'd myself unto him
Until some half hour past, when I was arm'd,
Not sure, though hoping of this good success,
I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
Told him my pilgrimage. But his flaw'd heart
(Alack, too weak the conflict to support!)
'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
Burst smilingly.

Edm. This speech of yours hath mov'd me,
And shall perchance do good; but speak you on;
You look as you had something more to say.

Alb. If there be more, more woful, hold it in;
For I am almost ready to dissolve,
Hearing of this.

Edg. This would have seem'd a period
To such as love not sorrow; but another,
To amplify too much, would make much more,
And top extremity.

Whilst I was big in clamour, came there a man,
Who, having seen me in my worst estate,
Shunn'd my abhorr'd society; but then, finding
Who 'twas that so endur'd, with his strong arms
He fastened on my neck, and bellowed out
As he'd burst heaven, threw him on my father;
Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him
That ever ear receiv'd; which in recounting
His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life
Began to crack. Twice then the trumpets sounded,
And there I left him tranc'd.

Alb. But who was this?

Edg. Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent; who in disguise

Followed his enemy king and did him service
Improper for a slave. 220

Enter a *Gentleman* with a bloody knife.

Gent Help, help! O, help!

Edg. What kind of help?

Alb. Speak, man.

Edg. What means that bloody knife?

Gent 'Tis hot, it smokes

It came even from the heart of—O, she's dead!

Alb. Who dead? Speak, man 225

Gent Your lady, sir, your lady^h and her sister
By her is poisoned; she hath confess'd it.

Edm. I was contracted to them both All three
Now marry in an instant

Enter *Kent*.

Edg. Here comes Kent.

Alb. Produce their bodies, be they alive or dead. 230

[Exit Gentleman.]

This judgment of the heavens, that makes us tremble,

Touches us not with pity. O, is this he?

The time will not allow the compliment

That very manners urges.

Kent. I am come

To bid my king and master aye good night. 235

Is he not here ?

Alb. Great thing of us forgot!

Speak, Edmund, where's the King? and where's Cordelia?

The bodies of Goneril and Regan are brought in.

Seest thou this object, Kent ?

Kent. Alack, why thus?

Edm. Yet Edmund was below'd.
The one the other poisoned for my sake, 240
And after slew herself.

Alb. Even so. Cover their faces.

Edm. I pant for life. Some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send
(Be brief in't) to the castle; for my writ 245
Is on the life of Lear and on Cordelia.
Nay, send in time?

Alb. Run, run, O, run!

Edg. To who, my lord? Who has the office? Send
Thy token of reprieve.

Edm. Well thought on. Take my sword; 250
Give it the Captain.

Alb. Haste thee for thy life. [*Exit Edgar.*]

Edm. He hath commission from thy wife and me
To hang Cordelia in the prison and
To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she fordid herself. 255

Alb. The gods defend her! Bear him hence awhile.

[*Edmund is borne off.*]

Enter *Lear*, with *Cordelia* [dead] in his arms; [*Edgar, Captain*, and others following]

Lear. Howl, howl, howl, howl! O, you are men of stone.
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack. She's gone for ever!
I know when one is dead, and when one lives. 260
She's dead as earth. Lend me a looking glass.
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.

Kent. Is this the promis'd end?

Edg. Or image of that horror ?

Alb. Fall and cease !

Lear. This feather stirs ; she lives ! If it be so, 265

It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows

That ever I have felt

Kent O my good master !

Lear. Prithce away !

Edg. 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.

Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all !

I might have sav'd her, now she's gone for ever ! 270

Cordelia, Cordelia ! stay a little Ha !

What is't thou say'st ? Her voice, was ever soft,

Gentle, and low—an excellent thing in woman.

I kill'd the slave that was a-hanging thee.

Capt. 'Tis true, my lords, he did.

Lear. Did I not, fellow ? 275

I have seen the day, with my good biting falchion

I would have made them skip. I am old now,

And these same crosses spoil me. Who are you ?

Mine eyes are not o' th' best. I'll tell you straight.

Kent. If fortune brag of two she lov'd and hated, 280

One of them we behold.

Lear. This' a dull sight Are you not Kent ?

Kent The same—

Your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius ?

Lear. He's a good fellow, I can tell you that.

He'll strike, and quickly too. He's dead and rotten. 285

Kent. No, my good lord ; I am the very man—

Lear. I'll see that straight.

Kent. That from your first of difference and decay

Have followed your sad steps.

Lear. You're welcome hither.

Kent. Nor no man else ! All's cheerless, dark, and deadly.

Your eldest daughters have fordoned themselves,
And desperately are dead 291

Lear Ay, so I think.

Alb. He knows not what he says; and vain is it
That we present us to him

Edg. Very bootless.

Enter a *Captain*.

Capt. Edmund is dead, my lord.

Alb. That's but a trifle here. 295

You lords and noble friends, know our intent.
What comfort to this great decay may come
Shall be applied. For us, we will resign,
During the life of this old Majesty,
To him our absolute power; [*to Edgar and Kent*] you to your
rights; 300

With boot, and such addition as your honours
Have more than merited.—All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings.—O, see, see!

Lear. And my poor fool is hang'd! No, no, no life! 305

Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never!

Pray you undo this button. Thank you, sir.

Do you see this? Look on her! look! her lips! 310

Look there, look there! *He dies.*

Edg. He faints! My lord, my lord!

Kent. Break, heart; I prithee break!

Edg. Look up, my lord.

Kent. Vex not his ghost. O, let him pass! He hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

Edg. He is gone indeed. 315

Kent. The wonder is, he hath endur'd so long.
He but usurp'd his life.

Alb. Bear them from hence. Our present business
Is general woe. [*To Kent and Edgar*] Friends of my soul,
you twain

Rule in this realm, and the gor'd state sustain 320

Kent. I have a journey, sir, shortly to go.
My master calls me; I must not say no.

Alb. The weight of this sad time we must obey,
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest have borne most; we that are young 325
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

Exeunt with a dead march

NOTES

ACT I. Scene I.

The place of Scene 1 is the King's palace. Holinshed ascribes to King Lear the founding of 'Caerlier, now called Leicester,' but that town is not mentioned in the play.

1. **more affected**: been more inclined to favour

2. **Albany**: North Britain, Scotland.

6, 7. **equalities**. . . **moiety**: the equality of their shares is so well balanced (so exact) that careful scrutiny on the part of neither can choose the other's share as better than his own. Modern English would require the singular—*equality*; but Elizabethan usage often pluralizes abstract nouns when two or more persons or things are in question.¹ Cf. i, 4, 288. 'the worships [i.e., honour] of their name'; *Winter's Tale*, ii, 1, 139. 'Hold your peaces'; *Hamlet*, i, 2, 251: 'I will requite your loves.' Disregard of the old idiom has led some editors to accept the Folio reading—'qualities'—instead of the Quarto reading—'equalities.' *Moiety* in Elizabethan English means 'share'—not necessarily 'half.'

9 ff. Coleridge remarks that Edmund 'hears his mother and the circumstances of his birth spoken of with a most degrading and licentious levity' (*Shakespearean Criticism*, ed. Raysor, p. 56). It is strange that Coleridge did not perceive that ll. 1-24 are spoken in a private conversation between Kent and Gloucester, and that Edmund stands in the background and hears nothing until he is called forward ('Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?') to be introduced to 'my Lord of Kent.'

11. **braz'd**: hardened—literally, plated with brass.

12. **conceive you**: understand what you mean. Gloucester puns on the word. Cf. *Hamlet*, ii, 2, 184-186.

17. **proper**: handsome.—**some year**: a year or so, about a year.

¹So, for example, 'strengths' (*Tempest*, iii, 3, 67); 'helps' (*Much Ado*, ii, 1, 399; 3 *Henry VI*, iv, 1, 45); 'charities' (*Winter's Tale*, ii, 1, 113); 'discretions' (1 *Henry VI*, iv, 1, 158); 'cunnings' (*Hamlet*, iv, 7, 156); 'renowns' (*Pericles*, ii, 2, 13).

22. **knave:** fellow—literally, boy (cf. German *knabe*). Often used in playful affection.—**something:** somewhat, rather.

32. **I shall study deserving:** I shall make every effort to be worthy of your favour.

33. **out:** away from Britain—seeking his fortune in a foreign land, probably in military service.—**a sennet:** a series of notes on a trumpet announcing the approach of a dignitary,

36. **I shall.** A regular form of assent to a command. *Shall* was felt to be more respectful than *will*, since it denotes absolute futurity, without any suggestion that obedience is a matter of *will*.—**my liege:** my liege-lord—i.e., the lord to whom I owe allegiance.

37. **we.** The 'royal *we*'. 'I the King.'—**our darker purpose:** i.e., the purpose explained in ll. 49-54—to give the best share to the daughter who loves him most. This purpose had not been revealed to the Councillors, though they knew that Lear intended to divide his kingdom and had been informed what shares he meant to give to Goneril and Regan (ll. 1-7).

39. **In three:** into three parts. Obviously, however, these parts (though called 'thirds', in ll. 82 and 130) are not thirds in the exact mathematical sense. This is made clear by ll. 49-54 and 87-88—**fast intent:** fixed purpose

41-46. **while . . . now.** Omitted in the Quartos.

42. **crawl.** That Lear's old age is not feeble (however he may express himself) is clear from the whole of Act 1. He still goes a-hunting (1, 3, 7).

44. **a constant will.** Synonymous with 'fast intent' (l. 39).

46. **prevented:** forestalled; hindered in advance. *Prevent* in Shakespeare never loses the force of *pre-*. Cf. iii, 4, 164; iii, 7, 83.—**France:** the King of France.—**Burgundy:** the Duke of Burgundy.

50, 51. Omitted in the Quartos.

54. **Where . . . challenge:** to her whose merit, added to my natural affection, constitutes a claim to the most generous gift *Nature with merit* means 'nature *plus* merit' *With merit* should not be interpreted as 'deservedly'

56. **can wield the matter:** can serve to express the fact. Mere

words, Goneril says, are not strong enough to *wield*—to handle with full power of expression—the subject of her love.

57-60. *space*, and *liberty*. *Space* expresses the idea of 'freedom from confinement'; *liberty* adds the idea of 'personal freedom in action.'—*what*: whatever; anything that.—*grace*: favour—*found*: found love from a child.

62. *Beyond all manner of so much*: beyond every kind of comparison that can be imagined; not,—beyond the comparisons that I have just expressed. *Manner* is the emphatic word.

64. *these bounds*: Lear indicates the boundaries in the map. Though he seems to give Goneril and Regan a chance to obtain the largest of the three shares, he has already determined their portions (as we learn from ll. 1-7), and he is reserving his 'largest bounty' for Cordelia, since he is confident that she loves him most.

65, 66. and . . . *rivers*. Omitted in the Quartos.—*champains*: fertile plains.—*rich'd*: enriched.

72. *prize me*. Imperative: 'value me.' This is better than to take *prize me* in the sense of 'I appraise myself.'

73, 74. *my very deed of love*: my love as it actually is in fact.—*that*: in that; inasmuch as.

76. *Which . . . possesses*: which the most delicate test of one's sensibility can claim as joys. *Square* means 'criterion.' This meaning comes from the use of the carpenter's 'square' for exact measurements. The Quartos read *possesses*; the Folios, *professes*. *Professes* would mean 'declares to be joys,' but is probably a misprint due to *profess* in l. 74.

77. *felicitate*: made happy. Past participles in *-ate* (Latin *-atus*) are very common.

78. *Highness*. Objective genitive: 'the love that I feel for your Majesty.'

80. *More richer than my tongue*: i.e., than I can express in words. Double comparatives and superlatives are common.¹ For *richer* the Folios read *ponderous*; but assuredly a 'heavy' tongue is not an expressive organ of speech, nor is 'ponderous

¹Cf. ii, 2, 108, 155; ii, 3, 7; ii, 4, 111, iii, 2, 64

love' a felicitous phrase. And, besides, *ponderous* is not (like *rich*) an antonym to *poor*.

83. **validity:** value.

85-87. **Although the last, not least.** A proverbial phrase, but not so trite in Shakespeare's time as it has since become. Cf. *Julius Caesar*, III, 1, 189; Tilley, *Elizabethan Proverb Lore*, pp 203, 204. The Folios read 'last and least,' which is strongly defended by some critics, as expressing not only Cordelia's youth, but her petite figure. White compares l. 201: 'that little seeming substance.'—to . . . **interest.** Omitted in the Quartos.—**Strive to be interest:** strive to be a claim, present their claims in rivalry. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, III, 2, 98. 'He hath more worthy interest to the state.'

90, 91. Omitted in the Quartos!

92. **Nothing can come of nothing.** An old proverb: 'Ex nihilo nihil fit.' Cf. i, 4, 145; Marston, *What You Will*, IV, 1, 248 (ed. Bullen, II, 398): 'Out of nothing, nothing is bred.' See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, pp 454, 455.

95. **my bond:** my bounden duty; as a daughter ought to love a father. See ll. 98-100. Cf. Holinshed: 'Knowing the great loue and fatherlie zeale that you haue alwaies borne towards me (for the which I maie not answere you otherwise than I thinke, and as my conscience leadeth me) I protest vnto you, that I haue loued you ever, and will continuallie (while I liue) loue you as my naturall father. And if you would mare vnderstand of the loue that I beare you, ascertaine your selfe, that so much as you haue, so much you are worth, and so much I loue you, and no more.'

97. **Good my lord.** *My lord* and similar vocative phrases are often treated as single words and preceded by an adjective. Cf. l. 122; iii, 2, 61; iii, 4, 1; iii, 7, 30.

99, 100. **Return . . . honour you:** In return I give you those duties that are most fitting—obedience, love, and the highest honour. Thus Cordelia explains what she means by 'my bond' (l. 95). *Duties* are 'things that are *due* to one, whether in act or feeling.'—as: which.

102. **love you all:** bestow all their love on you.

103. **my plight:** my plighted faith in wedlock.

106 **To . . . all.** Omitted in the Folios.

111-114. Lear's oath accords with his pagan religion. Cf. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, vii, 94-97:

Per sacra triformis
Ille deae, lucoque foret quod numen in illo,
Perque patrem socii cernentem cuncta futuri,
Eventusque suos et tanta pericula iurat.

—**mysteries:** secret rites to which initiates only are admitted. Hecate, as the goddess of the Lower World, is the patroness of magic. Cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, v, 1, 391; *Macbeth*, ii, 1, 51, 52; iii, 2, 41-43; *Hamlet*, iii, 2, 268, 269.—**orbs:** stars. *Operation* refers to their influence on a man's character and fortunes.

116. **Propinquity:** near relationship.—**property:** identity. Lear disclaims all kinship whatsoever.

118. **The barbarous Scythian.** By literary tradition from classical times the Scythians were regarded as the acme of all barbarians. Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, i, 1, 131. 'Was never Scythia half so barbarous'

119. **generation:** offspring.—**messes:** portions of food. Cf. D'Avenant, *The Wits*, i (Collier's Dodsley, VIII, 344): 'Unless, like cannibals, we might eat our own issue'

120, 121. **to . . . neighbour'd:** as closely hugged to my breast; as dearly loved.—**pitied:** i.e., as well (as much) pitied.

122. **thou my sometime daughter:** thou who wert once my daughter. Cf. *Hamlet*, i, 2, 8: 'our sometime sister, now our queen.'—**Good my liege.** Cf. l. 97, and note.—**liege:** liege lord.

124. **the dragon.** A dragon was the traditional crest of the ancient British kings.—**his wrath:** the object of his anger.

125, 126. **to set my rest:** to rely with confidence and to the full. An idiom derived from the game of primero, meaning literally, to 'make one's bet in reliance upon the cards in one's hand.' Here the word *rest* has also a suggestion of the repose to which Lear looks forward when he shall have shaken 'all cares and business from [his] age' (l. 40).—**nursery:** nursing;

tender care.—**Hence and avoid my sight!** Addressed to Cordelia.—**avoid:** leave—not, keep out of

128. **France:** the King of France Cf. l. 46.—**Who stirs?** Merely a form of impatient command: 'Call France! and be quick about it, somebody!' Cf. 'Who waits there?' and 'Who's there?' as calls to an attendant (*Henry VIII*, v, 2, 4, *Macbeth*, iii, 1, 72).

130. **digest:** combine, incorporate. The word implies such perfect assimilation that no distinction shall hereafter be possible.

131. **Let pride . . . marry her:** Let her self-confidence be her dowry and (if it can) win a husband for her—**plainness:** frankness—the quality of being 'plain-spoken.' Cf. l. 150; *Henry V*, i, 2, 244, 245.

Therefore with frank and with uncurbed plainness
Tell us the Dauphin's mind.

133. **the large effects:** the splendid outward tokens.

134. **Ourself:** I, the King. The royal *we*. Cf. l. 37.

138. **additions:** titles and honours. Cf. ii, 2, 27; v, 3, 68.

139. **Revénue.** A common accentuation. Cf. ii, 1, 102—the **rest:** everything else that pertains to royalty.

145. **make from the shaft:** avoid the arrow (of my displeasure).

146. **the fork:** an arrowhead that, instead of a barb, has two points like a pitchfork.

148. **What wouldst thou do?** Manifestly a protest against Lear's unwise action in giving his whole kingdom to Goneril and Regan.

151. **Reverse thy doom:** i.e., the judgment that thou hast pronounced against Cordelia. Thus the Quartos. The Folio reads 'Reserve thy state,' i.e., 'thy royal authority'

153. **rashness:** inconsiderate haste. Cf. l. 298; ii, 4, 172.—**Answer . . . judgment:** 'Let my life be answerable for my judgment, or, I will stake my life on my opinion' (Johnson).

156. **Reverbs:** reverberates.—**no hollowness.** For the proverb cf. *George a Greene*, iv, 4 (Greene, ed. Collins, II, 210):

'Emptie vessels haue^a the loudest sounds.' See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, p. 182.

157, 158. a pawn: a pledge (as in a wager) — To wage: to stake, to risk

159. the motive: the moving cause.

161 The true blank of thine eye: the mark at which thine eye directs itself in accurate sight; the counsellor to whom thou dost look for sound advice. The *blank* is the white circle at the centre of the target.

163. vassal! A term of contempt Cf. 2 *Henry VI*, iv, 1, 111: 'such a lowly vassal! — miscreant: faithless man.

164. Omitted in the Quartos.

169. recreant! traitor — one who proves false to his allegiance.

172. strain'd: over-strained, excessive. Cf. 2 *Henry IV*, i, 1,

161: 'This strained passion doth you wrong, my lord.'

174. nor . . . nor: neither . . . nor.

175. Our potency made good: my royal power being in this edict asserted and carried into effect.

176, 177. for provision: to enable thee to provide means.— diseases: discomforts. The Quarto reading. The Folio reads 'disasters.'

183. thus: i.e., as a tyrant.

187, 188. approve: prove true, confirm.—effects: acts, deeds—in fulfilment of your words.

190. his old course: as a faithful and plain-spoken subject.

191. Here's. A singular verb is common with two subjects, especially when the verb precedes

193. address toward you: address myself to you.

195. require: ask Not so imperative as in modern usage. Cf. v, 3, 43.

199. so: i.e., 'dear' in the sense of 'at a high valuation,' as the next line shows.

201. that little seeming substance: that little creature, who seems to be something *real*, but is in fact a mere vain *semblance* of reality. *Seeming substance* (not *little*) is emphatic. The phrase is practically a compound word and might be written *seeming-substance*. Lear implies that, since the love Cordelia

had alway. shown him was only preference, there is nothing genuine about her. Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, III, 2, 80: 'He takes false shadows for true substances.'

203 like: please. Cf. II, 2, 96.

205 infirmities: defects of fortune, disabilities.—owes: possesses, has. Cf. I, 4, 133.

207. Dow'r'd . . . oath: with my curse as her sole dowry, and disowned by my oath of rejection.

209. Election . . . conditions: Choice is not made—no one can make choice of a thing—when the conditions of the choice are so unfavourable.

211-214. For: as for.—To: as to. Cf. I. 220.—beseech: I beseech.—more worthier. Cf. I. 80.

217, 218. your best object: the main object of your love and favour.—The argument: the constant subject.

219, 220. this trice: this moment.—to: as to.

223, 224. monsters it: makes it a monster.—fore-vouch'd: heretofore attested.—Fall'n into taint: must have suffered decay.—her. Emphatic. Of the two alternatives France chooses the second, for the first is to him incredible.

226 ff. Cordelia's defence is in striking contrast with her valediction to Burgundy (ll. 250-252). It is manifest which suitor she prefers.

226. yet. Emphatic: 'in spite of all you have said in denunciation of me.' Cf. I, 4, 327; IV, 6, 62; V, 3, 239.

227 for: because. Cf. I, 2, 5; V, 3, 148. The sentence is broken—as often in emotional speech.

230. no vicious blot: no fault that leaves a stain on my moral character.—murther. Cordelia is thinking of such 'offences' as would be 'unnatural' and 'monstrous' (ll. 220-223); and, of these, murder and unchastity ('foulness') are the worst that she can imagine. Critics have found the mention of murder incredible, and Collier's feeble emendation 'nor other foulness' has met with some favour. But that phrase really makes no sense in the passage; for 'vicious blot' is not a definite kind of 'foulness.'

231, 232. unchaste. Dissyllabic adjectives and participles are

accented on the first syllable when they are followed by an accented word or syllable. So *profound*, *complete*, *humane*, *secure*, etc. Cf. *entire* (l. 243), *unpriz'd* (l. 262). See Schmidt, *Shakespeare-Lexicon*, 3d ed., 1902, pp. 1413-1415.—*dishonoured*: dishonourable—*grace* and *favour*. Synonyms.

233. *for which*: for want of which.

234. *still-soliciting*: always begging favours.

236. *Hath lost me in your liking*: hath ruined me in your regard. Cordelia uses the cold word *liking* instead of *love*. For *loss* in the sense of 'ruin' cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv, 12, 29. 'Beguil'd me to the very heart of loss!'

238. *a tardiness in nature*: a natural reticence or slowness of speech.

242, 243. *When . . . point*: when it involves considerations that have nothing to do with the complete and unqualified gist of the matter—i.e., with love that is purely and simply *love*—stands. A plural subject often has a verb in the singular, especially when the noun has a more or less collective sense.—*entire*: complete and unqualified. See note on l. 231.—*point*. Dissyllabic.

250. *Peace be with Burgundy!* A formal 'good-bye.'

251. *Since that*: since. *That* is often added to particles and relative adverbs. *if that*, *though that*, *since that*, *when that*, etc. Cf. i, 2, 5; ii, 1, 47; ii, 4, 242; iv, 6, 219; v, 3, 262.—*respects*: considerations.

258. *inflam'd respect*: passionate regard.

262. *unpriz'd precious*. A strong antithesis: 'not prized by her father (ll. 199, 200) but precious in my eyes.' Cf. ll. 253-256. For the accent see l. 231, note.

264. *here . . . where*. Used as nouns. Cf. *Othello*, i, 1, 137, 138:

An extravagant and wheeling stranger
Of here and everywhere.

268. *grace*: favour.—*benison*: blessing.

271. *The jewels*. Some editors adopt Rowe's change of *The* to *Ye*; but the article is common in vocative phrases. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, v, 3, 99.

- 274 as they are nam'd: by their right names
 275 **professed**: stored with mere professions of love.
 277. **prefer**: recommend. Cf. *Cymbeline*, II, 3, 49-51:

You are most bound to th' King,
 Who lets go by no vantages that may
 Prefer you to his daughter.

279. **study**: most zealous endeavour. Cf. I 32.

280, 281. **content**: please. Much stronger than in modern usage.—**At fortune's alms**: when fortune was doling out petty charities, not bestowing bounteous awards. Cf. *Othello*, III, 4, 121, 122.

282. **the want that you have wanted**: the same lack of affection that you have shown. Your own lack of affection for your father deserves a similar lack of affection from your husband.

283. **plighted**: enfolded. Their true feelings are covered by many folds of cunning hypocrisy.

287. **will hence**: will go hence. Such ellipsis of a verb of motion is very common.

294, 295. **with what poor judgment . . . grossly**. With cynical frankness Goneril admits that she and Regan have spoken hypocritically and that Lear's love for Cordelia has been well-deserved.—**grossly**: manifestly.

298-302 **time**: lifetime.—**rash**: hasty Cf. I 153; II, 4, 172 — **long-ingrafted condition**: a temperament that has been for a long time firmly imbedded in his nature. *Graft* is the old form of *graft*.—**therewithal**: therewith; together with them.—**choleric**: irritable.

304. **unconstant starts**: sudden freaks.—**like**: likely.

306-310. **compliment**: ceremony. Cf. V, 3, 233.—**hit together**: agree in our conduct toward him.—**carry . . . bears**: show such a mood in wielding his power as he now manifests.—**offend us**: give us trouble instead of being a benefit.

311. **on't**: of it.

312. **do**. Emphatic—in contrast with *think* (I. 311). Goneril, throughout the play, shows the more active and domineering spirit. Regan is softer of speech, but more venomous. Compare

Lear's description of the two sisters in II, 4, 173 ff.—i' th' heat: i.e., 'We must strike while the iron's hot' (Steevens). For an old song by the famous balladist Martin Parker ('A Prouerbe old, yet nere forgot, Tis good to strike while the Irons hott') see Rollins, *A Pepysian Garland*, 1922, pp. 229-233.

Scene II.

This scene takes place on the day after Scene I, for 'to-night' in l. 24 means 'last night' King Lear had left his own palace to accompany Goneril in Scene I (see I, 288-290).

1-22. Edmund's soliloquy rings all the changes on the words *natural* and *base* and *legitimate*. He is a 'natural son'—i.e., a bastard. The Elizabethans supposed the word *bastard* to be derived from the adjective *base*, though in fact the resemblance between the words is quite accidental. The substance of Edmund's argument is that a younger son who is a bastard has as much natural right to be his father's heir as an elder son who is legitimate, since the distinction is merely a matter of *law* (which is only codified *custom*) and not of *nature*. Cf. Webster, *The Duchess of Malfy*, iv, 1, 41-44 (ed. Lucas, II, 90):

Call them your children,
For though our nationall law distinguish Bastards
From true legitimate issue compassionate nature
Makes them all equall,

and *The Devil's Law Case*, iv, 2, 275-280 (II, 296):

We observe
Obedience of creatures to the Law of Nature
Is the stay of the whole world; here that Law is broke,
For though our Civill Law makes difference
Tween the base, and the legitimate, compassionat Nature
Makes them equall, nay, shee many times prefers them.

1-3. Nature . . . thy law. *Nature*, *my*, *thy*, *My*, *I*, and *custom* are emphatic—Stand in the plague of custom: occupy a posi-

tion that exposes me to the grievous disabilities that mere custom inflicts. To *stand in* means 'to be in a condition or situation'. So in III, 6, 101, 106; IV, 1, 4, IV, 4, 22, 23. Cf. *Henry VIII*, II, 4, 186, 187: 'Methought I stood not in the smile of heaven.'

4-6 **The curiosity of nations:** the nice distinctions which the laws of nations make in defiance of nature and common sense. Cf. I, 4, 75—**deprive me:** deprive me of the right to be my father's heir, disinherit me. Edmund is a younger son, so that, even if he were legitimate, he could not inherit his father's lands. Compare what Orlando says to his elder brother in *As You Like It*, I, 1, 48 ff: 'The courtesy of nations allows you my better in that you are the first born, but the same tradition takes not away my blood, were there twenty brothers betwixt us. I have as much of my father in me as you.'—**For that:** because. See I, 1, 251, note.—**twelve or fourteen moonshines.** Cf. I, 1, 19, 20.—**Lag of:** behind. 'Too lag' occurs in *Richard III*, II, 1, 90, in the sense of 'too tardily.'

6. **Why bastard? wherefore base?** Edmund passes on to discuss the second injustice that custom does him. If *bastard* means 'base son,' why should he be rated as 'base'—i.e., inferior, low, vile—when he is as good in mind and body as any 'legitimate' son?

7-9. **my dimensions . . . compact:** my bodily frame is as well constructed.—**generous:** befitting a gentleman.—**true:** symmetrical.—**honest:** chaste.

10. **base? . . . base?** Any word, if repeated over and over in a monotone, seems to lose its significance. Edmund plays this trick with *base* and *legitimate*, in order to prove that they are meaningless terms.

11-15. **lusty:** vigorous.—**More composition and fierce quality:** more strength of constitution and more energetic quality of body and mind. Cf. II, 1, 36: 'my more fierce endeavour.'—**fops:** fools, weaklings. Cf. I, 125; I, 4, 182.—**Got:** begotten.

17; 18 **Our father's love . . . legitimate.** Cf. I, 1, 19, 20.

19-21. **speed:** prosper; succeed in its purpose.—**top.** Edwards's emendation. The First Quarto reads 'tooth'; the Folio, 'to' th.' See Textual Notes.

23, 24. **choler:** anger.—**parted:** departed, gone.—**to-night:** last night.—**subscrib'd his pow'r:** his royal power having been given up—as one may 'sign away' one's rights by *subscribing* to a document.

25. **exhibition:** an allowance (from his daughters). Cf. *Two Gentlemen*, 1, 3, 68, 69.

What maintenance he from his friends receives,
Like exhibition thou shalt have from me

26 **Upon the gad:** on the spur of the moment. A *gad* is, literally, a *goad*.

28 ff. With Gloucester's insistence on his right to inspect his son's private correspondence; cf. *Richard II*, v, 2, 56 ff., where York is similarly imperative. Parental authority of the old fashion often seems tyrannical to us moderns.—**to put up:** to pocket up; to conceal.

32, 33. **that terrible dispatch of it:** that frantic haste in disposing of it.—**quality:** nature.

37. **pardon me:** excuse me from showing it.

40. **o'erlooking:** examination, perusal. Cf. v, 1, 50.

43. **to detain:** by withholding.

44. **to blame:** blameworthy, objectionable.

47. **an essay or taste:** a test.

48-52. **This policy . . . times:** The established order of society that forces the young to stand in awe of the aged deprives us of the enjoyment of life when life is at its best. *Policy* (which often means 'cunning' or 'strategic art') suggests that this order of society is a clever trick on the part of the aged.—**an idle and fond bondage:** a servitude to which it is foolish to submit. *Idle* and *fond* are synonyms 'silly.'—**not . . . suffer'd:** not by virtue of any power that it has, but, merely as the result of our submission.—**suffer'd:** allowed (to rule); submitted to.

65. **casement:** a window opening on hinges—what we call a 'French window'—**closet:** private room. Cf. iii, 3, 11.

66. **character:** handwriting. Cf. ii, 1, 73, 74: 'though thou didst produce My very character.'

67. **matter:** subject matter.

70. in respect of that: when I consider *that*—would fain think: should be glad to think. Cf. i, 4, 30

74. sounded. A nautical metaphor. Cf. *Hamlet*, III, 1, 7-9:

Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,
But with a crafty madness keeps aloof
When we would bring him on to some confession

81. Abhorred . . . detested. Synonymous: 'detestable.' Participles in *-ed* are common in this use, which survives in *damned* for *damnable*. Cf. i, 4, 284; ii, 4, 220

83. sirrah. A form of *sin*, used in familiar address, as by parents to children or by masters to servants. Cf. i, 4, 48, 109, 128, 185; iii, 4, 184; iv, 1, 51.—apprehend: arrest. Cf. ii, 1, 110.

84. Abominable. The usual Elizabethan spelling—*abhom-
inable*—denotes the formely accepted derivation from *ab
homine* (cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v, 1, 27). Hence the word usually carried the meaning of 'unnatural' or 'unfit for human society.'

87-95. you should run a certain course: you would be sure to proceed without the risk of making a mistake.—where: whereas.—to feel my affection: to test my sentiments.—pre-
tence of danger: dangerous purpose. Cf. i, 4, 74, 75.

97-100. meet: fitting.—by . . . satisfaction: have full information by the certain evidence of hearing the facts.

103-109. Edm. Nor . . . earth! Omitted in the Folios.—Nor . . . not. Double negatives, according to the old idiom. strengthen the negation. So in Greek and Anglo-Saxon. Cf. i, 4, 95; iii, 2, 86; iv, 6, 150; iv, 7, 67; v, 3, 290.—wind me into him: worm your way into his confidence for me.—I would . . . resolution: I would abandon my rank and fortune to have my doubts cleared up one way or the other. Cf. ii, 4, 25; *Julius Cæsar*, iii, 2, 184, 185: 'to be resolv'd If Brutus so unkindly knock'd or no.'

110, 111. presently: at once; without delay. Cf. i, 4, 159; ii, 4, 34, 118.—convey: manage.—withal: with it; with the facts of the case.

112. eclipses. See Introduction on the date of the play

113, 114. **Though the wisdom . . . effects:** Though scientific reasoning as to natural causes can explain the matter of eclipses in one way or another, yet the natural world of man finds itself scourged in the results that follow.

115. **mutinies:** insurrections, riots.

117-121. **This villain . . . graves.** Omitted in the Quartos.—**bias of nature:** natural course or tendency. A figure from bowling. The *bias* is the curve that the bowl makes in its course.—**Machinations:** plottings. Cf. v, 1, 46.

122. **lose thee nothing:** cause thee no loss. A backhanded promise to reward his detective work.

125-144. **foppery:** foolishness. Cf. l. 14.—**often the surfeit of our own behaviour:** Our fortune has had too much of our own foolish conduct—more than it can digest—and the result is misfortune. *Surfeit* means 'overeating' and 'indigestion'—**on necessity.** The causal use of *on*, which survives in *on purpose*, *on compulsion*.—**treachers:** traitors.—**by spherical predominance:** as the result of the predominance of some planet; i.e., of its being the most powerful of all the planets at the moment of our birth.—**influence.** An astrological term for the effect of a planet on one's nature and fortunes. It means literally *on-flowing*, as if a mysterious force came streaming down upon us. Cf. ii, 2, 113.—**goatish:** lustful.—**nativity:** birth.—**Fut! Pooh! nonsense!—that I am:** what I am.

146. **pat:** on the dot; just when he is needed. Edmund will not be obliged to 'seek him out' (l. 105).—**the catastrophe:** the event which brings the plot to an end.

147-149. **villanous:** miserable.—**Tom o' Bedlam:** a common phrase for a vagabond maniac. Compare Edgar's description of a 'Bedlam beggar' (ii, 3, 9 ff.). *Bedlam* (i.e., Bethlehem Hospital) was the London madhouse. See ii, 3, 14, note.—**Fa, sol, la, mi.** Omitted in the Quartos. Edmund sings to himself in order to seem to be in a brown study and unaware of his brother's approach.

156-162. **the effects:** the several fulfilments of the prediction. Cf. iv, 2, 15.—**succeed:** follow.—**dearth:** famine.—**diffidences:** cases of mutual distrust.—**dissipation of cohorts:** the breaking

up of armed troops. The word *cohorts* fits the era of the play as Shakespeare seems to have imagined that era—the time of more or less Romanized Britain—though the fabulous Lear's reign was long before that time. Cf. 'century' (iv, 4, 6).

157-165. as of . . . come! Omitted in the Folios.

164. a **sectary astronomical**: a devotee of the astrological sect; a believer in astrology. We may note that both Edmund and Edgar have no respect for astrology.

165. Come, come! A smiling protest against 'being regarded as 'a sectary astronomical.' Then Edmund becomes serious, as his question shows.

172-179. **countenance**: behaviour, manner. Cf. i, 4, 29.—**qualified**: modified, lessened.—**with . . . alloy**: He would do you some bodily harm, and even then his anger would hardly be satisfied.

181-187. I pray . . . brother? Omitted in the Quartos.

181, 182. **have a continent forbearance**: restrain yourself and keep out of his presence.

191. **the image and horror**: the horrible reality. Hendiadys.

198. **practices**: plots. Cf. ii, 1, 75, 109; ii, 4, 116; v, 3, 151.

200. **All . . . fit**: Everything, in my opinion, is proper for me that I can shape to fit my designs.—**fashion fit**: literally, make fitting by manipulation.

Scene III.

Between this scene and Scene i there is an interval of less than a fortnight (i, 4, 316, 317), during which King Lear has resided with Goneril.

2. Coleridge calls Oswald 'the only character of utter unredeemable *baseness* in Shakespeare' (*Shakespearean Criticism*, ed. Raysor, p. 62). Note, however, Oswald's fidelity at the point of death (iv, 6, 252-255).

3, 4. By day and night. An oath.¹ Capell compares *Henry VIII*, 1, 2, 213, 214.

By day and night,
He's traitor to the height!

King Lear also swears by day and night in 1, 1, 111, 112:

By the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate and the night.

—crime: offence. *The word was less specialized than in modern usage.

6. His knights grow riotous. See i, 4, 61, note.

7. On. For the causal use of *on* cf 1, 2, 128.

10. answer: be answerable for. Cf 1, 1, 153.

14. distaste: dislike.

16-20 Not . . . abus'd. Omitted in the Folios.

16. Idle: foolish, silly. Cf. 1, 2, 50.

19. us'd: treated.

20. With checks . . . abus'd: not merely with *soothing words*, but, when they are seen to be deluded as to their position in life, with *rebukes* as well. Children are sometimes coaxed, sometimes scolded: the same treatment must be applied to childish old men.—they. The antecedent is *old fools*—not, as Tyrwhitt thought, *flatteries*. His interpretation forces one to emphasize *they*, and that spoils the metre.

23-25. Advise . . . so: Give your fellow servants similar instructions. Goneril takes the lead in the plot against her father, but Regan is quite ready to fall in with her plans.—occasions: opportunities.—straight: straightway, immediately. Cf. 11, 4, 35; 111, 6, 22; v, 3, 279.

24, 25 I would . . . speak. Omitted in the Folios.

¹Thus Tate understood the passage. In his *King Lear* he reduces Goneril's speech to 'By day and night, this is insufferable, I will not bear it.'

Scene IV.

This scene is practically continuous with Scene III. Cf. 1, 3, 7, with 1, 4, 9.

2. **defuse**: disguise—literally, disorder Cf *Henry V*, v, 2, 61. 'defus'd attire'

4. **raz'd my likeness**: made my appearance unrecognizable

5. **canst serve**: canst manage to be engaged as a servant. Thus Kent explains why he has 'raz'd his likeness.'

7. **Horns within**. Lear 'returns from hunting' (1, 3, 7). This is significant. He is hale and hearty, though eighty years of age (iv, 7, 61).

12-17 **What dost thou profess?** Lear means, 'What is thy profession [i.e., trade or calling]?' Kent, in his reply, twists the sense of *profess*—**honest**: honourable.—**converse**: associate.—**judgment**: i.e., God's final judgment, which will call all men to account. This might be construed to accord with the pagan religion of Lear's time; but 'eat no fish' is a manifest anachronism. Such inconsistencies never troubled Shakespeare or his audience and need not worry his readers.

18. **cannot choose**: cannot help it.—**to eat no fish**. Since many of the Roman Catholics of Shakespeare's time were hostile to the government, this phrase became proverbial in the sense of 'to be a sound Protestant and loyal to the state' Warburton cites two pertinent passages. Fletcher, *The Woman-Hater*, iv, 2 (ed. Dyce, I, 74). 'Gentlemen, I am glad you have discovered him: . . . surely I did not like it when he called for fish'; and Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, 1, 2, 19, 20 (ed. Bullen, II, 15). 'I trust I am none of the wicked that eat fish o' Fridays.' For another anachronism cf. v, 3, 84-89.

29, 30. **countenance**: bearing—not merely 'face.' Cf. 1, 2, 172.—**would fain**. Cf. 1, 2, 70.

34. **can keep honest counsel**: can keep a secret when it is an honourable one.—**curious**: elaborate, complicated. Kent implies that he is too outspoken to be a skilful talker.

40 to love: as to love.

46 knave: boy (cf. German *knabe*) Often used as a term of familiarity—sometimes in affection, sometimes in contempt. Cf. l. 119; i, 1, 22

48. sirrah. See i, 2, 83, note.

49. So please you: if you please—literally, may it be pleasing to you. Oswald obeys Goneril and 'puts on weary negligence' in his treatment of the King (i, 3, 12).

50. clodpoll: clodpoll; stupid creature. A *clodpoll* is, literally, 'one who has a clod of earth for a head.'

58 roundest: plainest, most outspoken.

61 ff. We observe that Lear's Knights never show riotous or quarrelsome behaviour. They justify the King's favourable testimony (ll 285-288). Goneril's assertions to the contrary (i, 3, 6; i, 4, 221-223, 262-267) are mere falsehood. Cf. iii 4, 308.

62 entertain'd: treated

65. appears: that appears. The ellipsis of a relative pronoun in the nominative was formerly very common and still occurs in colloquial speech.

72. rememb'rest: remindest.—conception: idea.

73. a most faint neglect: a very languid and neglectful manner. Lear's phrase repeats the Knight's 'a great abatement of kindness' (l. 64). It is synonymous with Goneril's phrase, 'weary negligence' (i, 3, 12) Cf. Ford, *Love's Sacrifice*, i, 2 (ed Gifford and Dyce, II, 18): 'There is a mystery in this slight carelessness of his.'

74, 75 jealous curiosity: suspicious watchfulness about trifles. Cf. i, 2, 4.—pretence and purpose. Synonyms. Cf. i, 2, 95.

91. bandy: literally, to 'bat to and fro,' as a ball in tennis. Cf. ii, 4, 178.

95. Nor . . . neither. See i, 2, 103, note.—football player. Football was regarded as a low game in Shakespeare's day. See Magoun, *History of Football from the Beginnings to 1871*, 1938 (*Kölnner Anglistische Arbeiten*, XXXI).

100. I'll teach you differences: I'll teach you to observe the

proper distinctions of rank. Cf. Massinger, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, iv, 1, 39, 40 (ed. Gayley, III, 381):

How now, sirra? prating
Before my lord no difference?

102. **Go to!** A mere interjection of impatience or protest, like 'Come, come!' The phrase literally means 'Go away!' 'Get along with you!' Cf. iii, 3, 8.—**Have you wisdom?** Have you any common sense? If so, be off with you!—**So:** There, that's right! Off you go!

103. **earnest:** a small sum paid in advance to bind a bargain.

106. **coxcomb.** The professional fool (the jester), whether in real life or on the stage, wore a hood or cap crested with a piece of red flannel, patterned after the comb of a cock. See *As You Like It*, Introduction, p. xiv.

109. **Sirrah.** Here used in jocose familiarity. Cf. l. 128. See i, 2, 83, note.—**you were best take:** it would be best for you to take; you'd better take

112. **an:** if.—**smile as the wind sits:** take sides with the party that's in power

113, 114. **banish'd.** By dividing his kingdom between Goneril and Regan Lear has made his daughters independent, and so he has lost them.—**on's:** of his.—**did the third a blessing.** His banishment of Cordelia has made her Queen of France.

115. **needs.** Emphatic: 'None but a fool would be Lear's follower now.'

117. **How now, nuncle?** Hullo, uncle How d'ye do?—**nuncle:** contracted from *mine uncle*.

120, 121. Thus he calls Lear a double-dyed fool

122. **the whip.** Whipping was the punishment for fools who took too great liberties, as it was for naughty children. So Celia warns Touchstone 'You'll be whipp'd for taxation [i.e., for censorious talk] one of these days'; and he replies: 'The more pity that fools may not speak wisely what wise men do foolishly' (*As You Like It*, i, 2, 90 ff.). Lear's fool has not been whipped for many a day He is a privileged character—'all-

licens'd,' as Goneril calls him (l. 220); but Lear uses the customary warning.

125, 126. **Truth . . . stink:** Truth is whipped out of the hall, but Flattery is allowed to keep a comfortable place by the fire, no matter how ill she behaves. Compare Launce's pathetic soliloquy about his dog Crab's misdemeanours (*Two Gentlemen*, iv, 4, 1 ff).—**Lady:** a common name for a *brach*, i.e., a 'bitch hound.' Cf. iii, 6, 72; *1 Henry IV*, iii, 1, 238: 'Lady, my brach.'

127. **A pestilent gall to me!** This fellow is always making me wince by his satirical gibes! So, in l. 150, Lear exclaims, 'A bitter fool!'—**pestilent:** plaguy.—**gall:** an irritation; an irritating creature. To *gall* is, literally, to 'rub the skin off, so as to make a sore spot.' Cf. *Hamlet*, iii, 2, 252: 'Let the gall'd jade winch.' To *gall at* is to 'taunt.' Cf. *Henry V*, v, 1, 78: 'galling at this gentleman.'

131-140. A string of prudential maxims: 'Don't show all the money you have. Don't tell everything you know. Don't lend your last penny. Don't tire yourself out with walking when you have a horse to ride. Don't believe everything you hear. Don't stake at the next throw of the dice all the money that you have just won. Give up drinking and licentiousness and remain quietly at home instead of gadding about. Follow these precepts and your savings will increase.'

133. **owest:** ownest; dost possess. Cf. i, 1, 205.

134. **Ride more than thou goest.** Cf. *Roxburghe Ballads*, ed. Chappell, I, 59: 'He is a foole will go a-foot and let his horse stand still.'

138. **in-a-door:** indoors. Formed by analogy from *out-a-door* (i.e., out o' door). Cf. *Misogonus*, iv, 4, 27 (ed. Bond, p. 257) 'bringe him out a dore.'

145. **Nothing . . . nothing.** Cf. i, 1, 92, and note.

154-161. As he speaks these verses the Fool places himself opposite Lear and at some little distance. He accompanies the recitation with gestures. The Folios omit ll. 154-170 ('*Fool*. That lord . . . snatching').

154, 155. **That lord . . . land.** The Fool implies that nobody

gave Lear such idiotic advice: Lear was his own foolish counsellor. In the old play, to be sure, there is a courtier (named Skalliger) who suggests the love-test, but nothing can be clearer than that Shakespeare means the division of the kingdom to be Lear's own plan. See note on 1, 1, 37.

157. **Do thou for him stand:** Stand where you are and impersonate that lord. *Thou* and *him* are emphasized

159. **presently:** instantly. Cf. 1, 2, 110, 11, 4, 34, 118

160, 161 **The one:** i.e., the sweet fool. He points at himself. *Motley* is the regular word for a fool's ludicrously variegated costume. See note on l. 106.—**The other . . . there:** i.e., yourself, 'the bitter fool.' He points at Lear.

163, 164. **that thou wast born with.** Thus he calls Lear 'a born fool'—an idiot.

* 166-170. The Fool picks up Kent's phrase ('altogether fool') and plays with it as if it meant 'one who has all the folly that there is.'—a **monopoly:** a royal patent entitling me to be the sole dealer in foolishness.—**out:** granted me—they would have part on't . . . **snatching:** the courtiers who had helped me to secure the monopoly would insist on having their share—and so would the court ladies. Monopolies, and the bribery or corrupt influence by means of which they were often obtained, were constant subjects of satire in Shakespeare's time Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, 1, 4, 78, and note.

172. The answer to the Fool's conundrum is obvious, since *crowns* was a common term for the two parts of the eggshell; but Lear wishes to let him make his joke. Conundrums are not meant to be guessed.

175, 176. **thou . . . dirt:** You acted as foolishly as a man who carries his ass instead of letting it carry him. The Fool remembers a well-known fable.

179, 180. **If I speak . . . so:** If I am a fool to be so outspoken, do not have me whipped for my foolish frankness; let *him* be whipped who first discovers that I have told you the truth. *So* is emphatic. The implication is that Lear has already made this discovery and that *he*, if anybody, should be whipped for folly.

181-184. **Fools . . . year:** 'There never was a time when fools were less in favour; and the reason is, that they were never so little wanted, for wise men now supply their place' (Johns^{on}). Capell compares Lyly, *Mother Bombie*, II, 3 (ed. Bond, III, 191): 'I thinke Gentlemen had neuer lesse wit in a yeere.'—**foppish:** silly. Cf. 1, 2, 14, 125.—**apish:** ridiculous, grotesque.
191, 192. **Then they . . . sung.** The Fool adapts an old song (Rollins, *Old English Ballads*, 1890, p. 48).

Some men for sodayne joye do wepe,
and some in sorrowe synge,
When as they are in daunger slepe,
to put away mournyng.

Steevens compares Heywood, *The Rape of Lucrece* (Pearson ed., V, 179):

When Tarquin first in Court began,
And was approved King
Some men for sudden joy did weep,
But I for sorrow sing

193. **should play bo-peep:** should be so childish as to hide himself—i.e., renounce his royalty. Cf. Dekker, *Satiromastix* (Pearson ed., I, 257): 'Our vnhandsome-fac'd Poet does play at bo-peepes with your Grace, and cryes, "all-hidde" as boyes doe'; *Ballads from Manuscripts*, ed. Furnivall, I, 198: 'Thus youe make vs sottes [i.e., fools], And play wth vs boopepe.'

206 **one o' the parings.** Goneril, he argues, must have half of the King's wits, since he parted with all his wits when he gave away his kingdom.

208 **makes:** is doing—**frontlet:** a forehead cloth, a band worn on the forehead by ladies. Lear uses the term figuratively. Steevens quotes *Zepharia*, 1594, Canzon 27: 'But now my sunne it fits thou take thy set, And vayne thy face with frownes as with a frontlet.'

211. **an O:** a cipher, a zero. Cf. *As You Like It*, III, 2, 307, 308:

Jaques. There shall I see mine own figure.
Orlando. Which I take to be either a fool or a cipher.

217. **crum:** the soft part of the loaf.

219. **a sheaf'd peascod:** a shelled peapod.

220-223. **all-licens'd:** privileged to say and do anything and everything.—**other.** Common in this plural use.—**carp:** find fault.—**riots.** See note on 1, 4, 61.

225. **safe:** sure.

227, 228. **put it on:** encourage it.—**allowance:** approval.

230-233. **Which . . . proceeding:** And the acts of redress that we should find necessary in our care for a sound condition of the state might, in their operation, annoy you to an extent which, under other circumstances, would be shameful, but which the necessities of the case would at this juncture force one to style discreet procedure on our part.

235, 236. The cuckoo lays its eggs in other birds' nests. Cf. *Henry IV*, v, 1, 59-66.

Being fed by us, you us'd us so
As that ungentle gull, the cuckoo's bird,
Useth the sparrow—did oppress our nest;
Grew by our feeding to so great a bulk
That even our love durst not come near your sight
For fear of swallowing, but with nimble wing
We were enforc'd for safety sake to fly
Out of your sight.

—**it . . . its:** its . . . its. The usual genitive of *it* in Shakespeare is *his* (the ancient form for both masculine and neuter), but *it's* and *its* occur several times in the Folio. *It* in this use seems to have been common in 'baby talk,' but was not confined thereto. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, i, 3, 52; *King John*, ii, 1, 160-162.

Go to it grandam, child!
Give grandam kingdom, and it grandam will
Give it a plum, a cherry, and a fig.

—**by it young:** by its ungrateful nestling—the young cuckoo.

237. **So . . . darkling.** It was not unusual for a fool, after making some rather pointed jest which might call for censure, to cap it with a bit of pure nonsense in order to raise a laugh and thus avoid trouble. Lear's Fool seems to resort to this

professional trick here, as he certainly does in l. 245 and in 111, 2, 35, 36. Such¹ is Sir Joshua Reynolds's explanation, which is eminently satisfactory. Some critics, however, insist that the Fool means to express Lear's desolate condition, and Knight compares Spenser's version of the story in *The Faerie Queene*, 11, 10, 30:

But true it is that, when the oyle is spent,
 The light goes out and weeke is throwne away;
 So when he had resign'd his regiment [i.e., rule],
 His daughters gan despise his drouping day

—darkling: in the dark.

241. Whereof: with which.—fraught: well furnished—literally, freighted.

242. dispositions: states of mind, fits of capricious temper. Cf. l. 314.

244. an ass: even a fool like me.

245. Whoop, Jug, I love thee! Doubtless accompanied by a grimace and a caper. See note on l. 237.—Jug: a nickname for Joan. Cf. Mulcaster, *Elementarie*, 1582, p. 145: 'By *diminution* we call *Iohn, Iak, Richard, Dic, Ione, Iug, Bartholomew, Bat, Christofer, Kit, Elisabeth, Besse, Catherin, Cate*.'

248. his notion: his understanding. Cf. *Macbeth*, iii, 1, 83: 'a notion craz'd.'

249. waking? Am I awake?

252-256. Lear. I . . . father. Omitted in the Folios.

252-254. that: i.e., who I am? Lear pays no attention to the Fool's speech.—the marks of sovereignty . . . daughters: the outward signs of sovereignty, which would persuade me that I am King Lear—and *he*, I know, had daughters. *Knowledge* and *reason* are not to be taken as in apposition with 'the marks of sovereignty.'

256. Which . . . father: Yes, you have daughters; and they will make you an obedient father.—Which: whom.

258. This admiration: this pretending to wonder who you are.

261. wise. Emphatic. *You should* is rapidly pronounced—almost as *you sh'd*.

262-267. See note on l. 61.

262. **keep**: support, maintain.

263. **disorder'd**: disorderly.—**debosh'd**: dabbled.

264. **manners**: conduct and character. Cf. Latin *mores*.

265. **Shows**: appears.—**Epicurism**: riotous living. Cf. Rowlands, *The Letting of Humour's Blood*, 1600, sig. A2 v^o (Hunterian Club ed., I, 4): 'Epicurisme cares not how he liues, But still pursueth brutish Appetite', Dekker, *Woerke for Armorours*, 1609 (ed. Grosart, IV, 139): 'Lust, Epicurisme, Pride, and Follie.'

267. **grac'd**: honourable.

270. **disquantity your train**: reduce the size of your retinue.

271, 272. **depend**: attend you as dependents; remain in your service.—**besort**: befit.

279. **Woe that**: Woe to him that.—O, . . . come? Omitted in the Folios.

283. **Than, the sea-monster**: than any monster of the deep. Cf. iv, 2, 49, 50. *The* is manifestly the 'generic article.'—**Alb. . . patient**. Omitted in the Quartos.—**patient**: calm.

284. **Detested**: detestable. Cf. i, 2, 81

285. **choice and rarest**: choicest and rarest. See Abbott, *Shakespearean Grammar*, §398.—**parts**: qualities. Those critics who regard Goneril's complaints about the behaviour of Lear's attendants as more or less justified, fail to note the manifest purpose of Lear's words here. That his Knights were well-behaved is indicated also by the moderation of speech and manner shown by one of them in ll. 55 ff.

288. **worships**: honour. Abstract nouns are often pluralized when they refer to more than one person. See i, 1, 6, note.

289. **show**: appear.

290, 291. **my frame of nature**: the whole structure of my nature. The figure is that of a building that is thrown off its foundation ('the fix'd place') by a powerful mechanical contrivance. Cf. Otway, *Venice Preserved*, II, 3 (Mermaid ed., p. 316): 'We are the mighty engine Must twist this rooted empire from its basis.' Certainly there is no allusion to the torture of the rack, which, to be sure, wrenches the human

frame, but not from its 'fixed place.' *Engne* was a general word for a machine of any kind.

292 *gall*: bitterness.

294. *dear*: precious.

296 *Of . . . you*. Omitted in the Quartos.

297 The second *hear* and *dear* are prolonged in pronunciation, with a change in pitch, so as to have the force of dissyllables. Cf l. 362.

301, 302 *increase*: fertility.—*derogate*: blighted (by barrenness)—literally, deteriorated.

303. *teem*: bear children

304, 305. *Create . . . spleen*: 'Make her child consist of spleen only; make it all malice and perversity. Cf *Henry VIII*, ii, 4, 109, 110: 'Your heart is cramm'd with arrogancy, spleen, and pride.'—*thwart*: perverse—always feeling and acting in opposition.—*disnatur'd*: unnatural.

306-308. *brow of youth*: youthful brow.—*cadent*: falling.—*fret*: wear.—*pains*: care.

314. *disposition*: mood. Cf. l. 242.

317. *Within a fortnight*. Less than a fortnight, then, has elapsed since the end of Scene 1.

321 *Blasts and fogs upon thee!* Fog and mist were thought to contain the seeds of pestilence.—*Blasts*: blighting strokes of pestilence. Cf. Peele, *Edward I*, vi, 25-27* (ed. Bullen, I, 132):

This clime o'erlow'ring with black congeal'd clouds,
That take their swelling from the marsh soil,
Fraught with infectious fogs and misty damps

322. *untented*: that are too deep to be probed; or, more exactly, to be searched with a *tent*—a slender roll of lint with which wounds are cleansed.

323-326 *fond*: foolish. Cf. i, 2, 50.—*lose*: waste—since these tears are of no avail.—*temper*: moisten, soften.—*Yea . . . this?* Omitted in the Folios.

327. *Let . . . so*. Omitted in the Quartos.—*Yet*. The emphatic *yet*: 'after all'; 'in spite of everything.' Cf. i, 1, 226; iv, 6, 62; v, 3, 239.

328. **comfortable**: ready to give me aid and comfort.

332. **thou . . . thee**. Omitted in the Folios.

336. **content**: be satisfied, don't worry

338, 339. **Take the fool with thee**. An absolutely perfect pun. The literal sense is obvious; but the phrase was a regular farewell gibe 'Take the epithet "fool" with you as you go' 'Good-bye, fool as you are!' Cf. *1 Henry IV*, v, 3, 22. 'A fool go with thy soul'

340-344. The rhymes were good in Elizabethan pronunciation.—**Should sure to**: should certainly be sent to.—**a halter**: a hangman's rope. Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, v, 1, 47: 'A halter, soldiers! hang him on this tree!'

345-356. **This man . . . unfitness**. Omitted in the Quartos.

347. **At point**: fully equipped. Cf. *Hamlet*, i, 2, 200: 'Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pe'

348. **buzz**: whisper, idle rumour. Craig compares Chapman, *The Widow's Tears* (Pearson ed., III, 24): 'Thinke 'twas but a Buzz deus'd by him to set your braines a work.' See *Hamlet*, iv, 5, 90, and note.

352. **still**: ever, always.

353. **Not . . . taken**: rather than always live in fear to be attacked by some harm.

360. **particular**: own.

362. **compact it more**: make what I fear seem more solid, more substantial—**more**. Dissyllabic. Cf. l. 297.

364. **This milky gentleness and course of yours**. Hendiadys: 'this mild and gentle course of action that you prefer.' Cf. *Macbeth*, i, 5, 18. 'th' milk of human kindness.'

365. **under pardon**: if you will pardon me for saying so.

366. **at task**: taken to task; blameworthy.

367. **for harmful mildness**: for leniency that may prove injurious.

369. **Striving . . . well**.^{*} Malone cites *Sonnet* 103:

Were it not sinful then, striving to mend,
To mar the subject that before was well?

The proverb bids us 'let well (or well enough) alone.'

371. **th' event:** Let us wait for the outcome. That will show which of us is right Cf. *All's Well*, iv, 4, 35? 'Still the fine's the crown'; 2 *Henry VI*, v, 2, 28: 'La fin couronne les œuvres'; Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vi, 2383 (ed. Macaulay, III, 231): 'An ende proveth every thing' See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, p. 182. Albany is a feeble character—no match for Goneril. She despises her 'mild husband' and has the last word in the quarrel in iv, 2. Charitable critics have tried to rehabilitate him and Nicoll Smith holds that 'events show that he is not wanting in moral force.' If so, he is very tardy in its manifestation.

Scene V

This scene occurs on the same day as Scenes III and IV.

1-3. **these letters:** this letter (Lat. *litterae*).—**demand:** question, enquiry.—**out of:** suggested by.

8, 9. **If . . . heels.** Cf. Hoccleve, *Male Regle*, l. 232: 'No more than [i.e., than if] hir wit were in hire heele.'—**in's:** in his.—**'t:** it—i.e., his brain.—**kibes:** chilblains.

11. **slipshod:** in slippers—because of chilblains, for you have no wits and therefore will have no kibes on them.

14, 15. **Shalt:** Thou shalt.—**kindly.** The Fool puns on *kindly* in the ordinary sense and in the sense of 'according to her nature.'—**a crab:** a wild apple, a crabapple—notoriously sour. Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, ii, 1, 229, 230.

17. **canst:** canst thou.

20-23. **on's:** of his. Cf. i, 4, 114.—**of:** on.—**side's:** side [of] his.—**'a:** he.

30-33. **snail . . . house.** Cf. Chapman, *An Humorous Day's Mirth* (Pearson ed., I, 60). 'Hee carries his house vpon his head like a snail.'—**put's:** put hrs.—**horns.** Shakespeare's audience were at liberty to recognize the everlasting 'horns' joke, for which they were on the alert. The Fool does not mean to call Lear a cuckold: he simply accepts horns as the inevitable adornment of married men.

35. **Be.** A common old form for the plural.

37-41. **the seven stars:** the Pleiades.—**moe:** more. Not a contraction of *more* but an independent formation from the same root.—**not eight?** The Fool has intentionally prepared a conundrum so obvious that the answer is inevitable. Then he can make the point that he wishes: 'Thou wouldst make a good fool', 'You're good at this kind of foolery.'

42. **To tak't again perforce!** 'He is meditating on' his resumption of his royalty' (Johnson). Cf. l. 35 and i, 4, 327-332.

50. **in temper:** in a normal condition of mind. *Temper* is literally one's natural 'temperament' or 'disposition.'

54, 55. This bit of buffoonery is addressed to the audience. The Fool holds the stage for a moment before he follows his master. Cf. iii, 2, 80 ff.

ACT II. Scene I.

This scene opens in the night that follows Lear's departure for the Duke of Cornwall's castle at the end of i, 5, and closes just before dawn on the next day.

1. **Save thee:** God save thee. A common greeting, to which Curan makes the conventional answer. Cf. *Hamlet*, iv, 6, 6, 7. 'Sailor. God bless you, sir. *Horatio*. Let him bless thee too.'

8, 9. **ones.** *News* was originally a plural—'new things'.—**ear-kissing:** whispered.—**arguments:** subjects of speech; remarks. Cf. i, 1, 218.

11. **toward:** coming; in the near future. Cf. iii, 3, 21; iv, 6, 213.

16. **The better!** So much the better! *

19. **of a queasy question:** requiring delicate management. *Queasy* is, literally, 'qualmish' and applies to an uneasy condition of the stomach.

21. **Descend!** Edgar is hiding in Edmund's chamber. See i, 2, 183.

25-29. **Have you not spoken, etc.:** Have you not committed

yourself, on one side² or the other, in the quarrel between the two Dukes? See ll. 7-15.—**Upon his party?** on *his* side.—**Advise yourself:** Bethink yourself; consider.

31. **In cunning:** as a trick—in order that I may not seem to be in collusion with you

32. **quit you well:** put up a vigorous defence.

36, 37. **I have seen . . . sport.** A wild gallant would sometimes stab his arm and mix the blood with the wine when he drank his lady's health. Cf. Middleton, *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, v, 2, 198 (ed Bullen, II, 352): 'Stabbing of arms for a common mistress'; *The Man in the Moone*, 1609 (ed. Halliwell, p. 43) 'He hath let his owne arme blood . . . and quaffed an health thereof in praise of his mistresse.'

41, 42. **Mumbling of wicked charms,** etc Edmund adapts his story to his father's superstition. See i, 2, 112 ff—**stand** ^{his} stand his.

47, 48. **that:** when that, when. *That* is often added to particles and relative adverbs (*if that, since that, when that*, etc.), and may be used alone instead of repeating the particle or adverb. Cf. v, 3, 143, and see i, 1, 251, note.—**revenging:** avenging. Cf. iv, 2, 96.—**bend:** direct, aim.

49. **bond.** Cf. i, 1, 95.

51. **loathly opposite:** bitterly opposed

52-54. **fell:** fierce.—**home:** with an attempt at a home thrust.—**unprovided:** undefended—since I was not on my guard.—**lanch'd:** lanced, pierced.

55. **my best alarum'd spirits:** all my best powers (energies) called to arms (*all' arme*).

57. **gasted.** A strong word—'panic-stricken.'

60. **dispatch:** finish him.

61. **worthy:** honourable.—**arch and patron:** chief patron. Hendiadys. Cf. Bunyan, *Mr. Badman* (Cambridge ed., p. 46): 'They taught him to be an *Arch*, a *chief* one in all their ways.'

64. **caitiff:** wretch, rascal. Cf. iii, 2, 55.—**to the stake:** to the place of execution; to his death. A figure derived from the stake to which one was fastened for execution by fire. Not to be taken literally.

67, 68. **pight**: determined. *Pight* is the past participle of *pitch*, 'to fix firmly' (as in 'pitch a tent').—**curst**: angry.—**discover him**: reveal his purpose.

71-75. **virtue . . . worth**. These words are not objects of *of*; they are in the same construction as *reposal*: 'Would our father's putting any confidence in you, or would any virtue or worthiness on your part,' etc.—**faith'd**: believed, trusted—**character**: handwriting. Cf. i, 2, 66.—**suggestion**: evil suggestion.—**practice**. Synonymous with *plot*. See i, 2, 198, note.

78. **pregnant and potential**: ready and powerful.

79. **fast'ned**: confirmed (in his villany).

80. **his letter?** See i, 2, 48 ff.—**got**: begot.—**Tucket**. A succession of notes on a trumpet. Gloucester recognizes this particular tucket as the Duke's special signal.—**within**: behind the scenes.

82. **ports**: seaports. See ii, 3, 3. Craig compares *Soliman and Perseda*, ii, f, 332-336 (Kyd, ed. Boas, p. 193):

But for Assurance that he may not scape,
Weele lay the ports and hauens round about,
And let a proclamation straight be made
That he that can bring forth the murtherer
Shall haue three thousand Duckets for his paines.

83. **his picture**. Furness compares *No-body and Some-body*, sig. D3, lf. 2 r°:

Let him be straight imprinted to the life:
His picture shall be set on euery stall,
And proclamation made, that he that takes him,
Shall haue a hundred pounds of Somebody.

86. **natural**. Gloucester has both senses of the word in mind. Edmund is his 'natural son' and (he thinks) feels for him the 'natural affection' of a son for a father.

87. **capable**. *Capable of* means 'legally capable of inheriting.' Gloucester promises to legitimize the bastard by due process of law.

91. **dost?** dost thou? Cf. iii, 2, 68.

93, 94. Thus Regan venomously suggests a subtle association between her father's character and Edgar's plot of parricide. She is more outspoken in ll. 96, 97.—*Nam'd* and *your* are dissyllabic.

99 **Yes**. Prolonged and dissyllabic—*consort*. Often used in contempt or reprobation—as we might say 'gang' Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, iii, 1, 47, 48, and note.

100. **though**: if.—**were ill affected**: had disloyal sentiments toward you.

101. **put him off**: incited him to. Cf. *Coriolanus*, ii, 3, 259, 260. 'Say you ne'er had done't . . . but by our putting on.'

102 **expense**: spending.—**révenues**. Often thus accented Cf. i, 1, 139.

106. **assure thee**: assure thyself; be assured.

108. A **childlike office**: dutiful service befitting a son. Cf. i, 4, 107, 181; iii, 1, 42.

109, 110. **bewray**: reveal; make known.—**practice**: plot. See i, 2, 198, note.—**apprehend**: arrest Cf. i, 2, 83.

113, 114. **of**: with reference to.—**Make . . . please**: Form your own plan for his capture and punishment, using my authority in any way that may seem good to you.—**For**: as for.

115. **doth**. A verb with two subjects is often singular, especially when they express one unified idea.

116. **ours**. The 'royal *we*'

121. **threading**: making our way through. Steevens compares *Coriolanus*, iii, 1, 124. 'They would not thread the gates.'—**dark-ey'd night**. Cf. Heywood, *Love's Mistress*, iii, 1, 4 (Pearson ed., IV, 121): 'Thou smooth-cheek't negro night, the black-eyed Queene.'

122. **poise**: weight, importance.

125, 126. **differences**: disputes. Cf. ii, 2, 56.—**which**: which letters.—**from our home**: when away from home. *From* is emphatic.

127. **attend dispatch**: are waiting to be sent.

129, 130. **business**. Trisyllabic. Cf. v, 3, 318.—**craves the instant use**: requires to be carried out without delay.

Scene II

This scene begins and closes about sunrise on the same day on which Scene 1 ends (11, 2, 1, 170).

1. Art of: Art thou of; Dost thou belong to.

9. in *Lipsbury Pinfold*. A *pinfold* is a pound—a 'pen in which stray cattle are confined' *Lipsbury* means 'Lipsburgh,' 'Liptown.' 'In the Liptown pen,' then, is 'in the enclosure adjacent to the lips,' i.e., 'between my teeth,' 'in my jaws'—and so, 'in my clutches.' Thus Nares.¹ For the figure cf. *Richard II*, 1, 3, 166, 167.

Within my mouth you have enjail'd my tongue,
Doubly portcullis'd with my teeth and lips,

and *Lucrece*, 677-679.

The poor lamb cries,
Till with her own white fleece her voice controll'd
Entombs her outcry in her lips' sweet fold;

Euphues (ed. Bond, I, 279): 'We maye see the cunning and curious work of Nature, which hath barred and hedged nothing in so stronglye as the tongue, with two rowes of teeth, therewith two lyppes'²; Marlowe, 2 *Tamburlaine*, 1v, 3 (ed. Dyce, 1, 196):

Your majesty must get some bits for these,
To bridle their contemptuous cursing tongues,
That, like unruly never-broken jades,
Break through the hedges of their hateful mouths,
And pass their fixed bounds exceedingly.

¹Tate may or may not have understood 'Lipsbury pinfold' At any rate he retained the phrase in his *King Lear*. On such punning names see Jespersen, *Nordisk Tidsskrift*, 3d Series, IX, 65-72. Examples are. *Needham* (for 'poverty'), *Cuckoldshue*, *Hempden Lane* ('the road to the gallows')

²Bond shows that Lyly uses Plutarch, *De Garrulitate*, cap. 3 Cf. the Homeric phrase *ἔρκος ὀδόντων*, 'the fence (or guard) of the teeth'

15-27 Kent upbraids Oswald as a cowardly menial who parades as a gentleman.—**three-suited**. Edgar, in the guise of Poor Tom, when he describes himself as formerly a serving-man, declares that he then 'had three suits to his back' (iii, 4, 141, 142). This seems to have been the regular allowance for a manservant. Wright quotes Jonson's *Silent Woman*, iii, 1 (Yale ed., p. 48), where Mistress Otter describes her husband as a dependent 'Who giues you your maintenance, I pray you? Who allowes you your horse-meat, and man's-meat? your three sutes of apparell a yeere? your foure paire of stockings, one silke, three worsted?'—**hundred-pound**. Steevens compares Middleton, *The Phoenix*, iv, 3, 55, 56 (ed. Bullen, I, 193): 'How's this? am I used like a hundred-pound gentleman?' i.e., one of very small property.—**worsted-socking**. Gentlemen wore silk stockings.—**lily-liver'd**; white-liver'd; i.e., having no blood in your liver, and therefore cowardly. Cf. iv, 2, 50; *Macbeth*, v, 3, 15: 'Thou lily-liver'd boy'; *Merchant of Venice*, iii, 2, 83-86:

How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars,
Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk!

Twelfth Night, iii, 2, 64-67: 'For Andrew, if he were open'd, and you find so much blood in his liver as will clog the foot of a flea, I'll eat the rest of th' anatomy.'—**action-taking**: going to law instead of meeting one's enemy in combat.—**glass-gazing**: always preening himself in a mirror.—**superserviceable**: ready to serve one's master in ways that are beyond the limits of honourable service—even to the extent, Kent adds, of acting as a bawd.—**finical**: fussy about trifles.—**one-trunk-inheriting**: all of whose possessions are contained in a single box or trunk. To *inherit* means to 'possess' (cf. iv, 6, 128).—**bawd**: pander, procurer.—**in way of good service**: if it comes in your day's work as a devoted servant.—**the composition**: a compound.—**and heir**. A fine touch!—not merely the *son*, but the *heir*, inheriting all the mongrel's qualities.—**thy addition**: the titles I have just given thee. Cf. i, 1, 138; v, 3, 68.

29. of thee: by thee.

34-36. I'll make . . . o' you: I'll drill you full of holes, so that the moonlight can soak into you until you are a mere sop—steeped in moonshine. Thus Tate understood the passage, for in his *King Lear* he makes Kent say 'I'll make the moon shine through thee.'—**Draw**: draw your sword—**cullionly**: vile.—**barbermonger**: constant dealer with barbers for the care of your hair and beard

39-45. **Vanity the puppet**. Puppet shows were popular in Shakespeare's time. They frequently produced morality plays with allegorical *dramatis personæ*. 'Lady Vanity' is mentioned by Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, II (ed. Dyce, I, 273), by Nashe (ed. Grosart, II, 130, III, 15), by Jonson, *The Devil is an Ass*, I, 1 (Yale ed., p. 7), in *Sir Thomas More*, iv, 1, 147 (ed. Brooke, *Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p. 404), and (as 'Dame Vanity') by Munday, *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington*, II, 1 (Collier's Dodsley, XIII, 40). Vanity, 'Fortune's chief servant,' is a character in *Liberality and Prodigality* (printed in 1602).—**carbonado**: slash (as a piece of meat for broiling). Cf. Mabbe, *Celestina* (ed. *Tudor Translations*, p. 204): 'Me thought still as I ranne, they were cutting and carbonading my shoulders', Marlowe, *Tamburlaine*, iv, 4 (ed. Dyce, I, 86). 'I will make thee slice the brawns of thy arms into carbonadoes.'—**Come your ways!** Come on! *Ways* is an old adverbial genitive: 'on your way.'—**you neat slave**: you foppish fellow. See l. 60: 'a tailor made thee.' Cf. *1 Henry IV*, I, 3, 33-36.

Came there a certain lord, neat and trimly dress'd,
Fresh as a bridegroom . . .
He was perfumed like a milliner;

Chapman, *All Fools*, v, 1 (Pearson ed., I, 174): 'that neate spruce slaue.'

48. What's the matter? What's the quarrel about? In modern slang—'What's the row?'

49, 50. With you. A challenge: 'My quarrel is with you, if you like' 'I am ready to fight with you!'—**goodman boy**. A form of address to a presumptuous youngster. Cf. *Romeo and*

Juliet, i, 5, 79, 80: 'What, goodman boy? . . . Am I the master here, or you?' Goodman was the title regularly accorded to a farmer or other respectable person below the rank of gentleman. —*flesh* ye! initiate you; give you your first taste of fighting. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, v, 4, 133, 134: 'Full bravely hast thou flesh'd Thy maiden sword.'

56. *your difference*: your dispute. Cf. ii, 1, 125.

59, 60 *disclaims in thee*: renounces all claim to have produced thee. — *a tailor made thee*. Cf. Jonson, *The Staple of News*, i, 2, 110, 111 (Yale ed., p. 16): 'Thence comes your prouerbe, The Taylor makes the man' Schmidt cites *Cymbeline*, iv, 2, 81. See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, pp. 616, 617. • 69-73. *zed!* . . . unnecessary letter! The letter *z* is unnecessary because its sound is usually expressed by *s*. Farmer cites Richard Mulcaster: *Elementarie*, 1582, cap. xvii (ed. *Garnpagnac*, 1925, p. 136): 'Z, is a consonant much heard amongst vs, and seldom sene. I think by reason it is not so redie to the pen as s, is, which is becom lieutenant generall to z' (cf. cap. xiv, p. 107) — *this unbolted villain*: this unsifted rascal; this fellow who is rascal through-and-through. — *mortar*. Steevens compares Massinger, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, i, 1: 'I will . . . tread you into mortar; Not leave one bone unbroken.' — *daub*: plaster — *a jakes*: a privy. — *wagtail?* A comically uneasy bird, so called from the spasmodic up-and-down jerking of its tail. Oswald is too scared to stand still. Cf. Ford, *The Broken Heart*, ii, 1 (ed. Gifford and Dyce, I, 241): 'How they flutter, Wagtails and jays together!'

76. *anger hath a privilege*. Cf. *King John*, iv, 3, 32: 'Sir, sir, impatience hath his privilege.'

79. *honesty*: honourable character.

80-82 *the holy cords*: the sacred bonds of family affection. — *too intrinse*: tied in too close and intricate a knot (like the 'Gordian knot'). — *smooth*: aid and abet by their flattery. *Smooth* for 'flatter' is common. Cf. *2 Henry VI*, i, 1, 158, 157: 'Let not his smoothing words Bewitch your hearts' — *rebel*. Attracted into the plural by the plural nouns that precede

83. *Bring oil to fire*. Cf. *All's Well*, v, 3, 6-8; Chettle, *Kind-*

Hartes Dreame, 1592 (ed. Harrison, p. 36): 'I know I need not bring oyle to thy fire'; Ingelend, *The Disobedient Child* (ed. Halliwell, Percy Society, 1848, p. 15) 'After the proverbe, we put oyle to the fyre' See Tilley, *Elizabethan Proverb Lore*, pp. 151, 152

84. **Renegé**, affirm: say 'no' or 'yes' to suit their masters' varying moods. Cf. iv, 6, 99: 'To say "ay" and "no" to everything I said!'—**renegé**: deny. The *g* is pronounced like *g* in *get*—**turn their halcyon beaks**. It was believed that the halcyon (kingfisher), if hung up, would serve as a weathervane, turning about so that its beak would always point in the direction from which the wind comes. Steevens cites Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta* (ed. Dyce, I, 238): 'But how now stands the wind? Into what quarter peers my halcyon's bill?'

—85. **gale and vary**. Henslow: 'varying gale,' 'turn of the wind.'

86. **following**: always *following* their master, though they do not know whether he is right or wrong.

87. **epileptic**. Oswald is trying to smile, but he is so frightened that his face looks as if he were in a fit.

88. **Smile**: smile at.—**as . . . fool**: as if I were a jester trying to make you laugh.

89, 90. **Sarum Plain**: Salisbury Plain.—**Camelot**: the site of King Arthur's court. Tradition identified it with an anciently fortified hill near Cadbury. In the moors in that vicinity there were flocks of geese.

93. **antipathy**. The phenomena which more recent science has explained by the doctrine of 'attraction and repulsion' were ascribed to 'sympathy and antipathy' in the nature of objects.

96. **likes**: pleases. Cf. i, 1, 203.

98. **plain**: plain-spoken.

103, 104. **constrains the garb . . . nature**: puts on by force the style of blunt sauciness in speech, quite contrary to his real nature.—**from**. The emphatic *from*, which means literally 'away from,' and so, 'contrary to,' 'quite out of accord with.'

106-108. **so**: well and good!—**These kind**. A common old idiom.—**ends**: purposes.

109, 110. **silly-ducking observants**: obsequious parasites, who are always making low bows after their ridiculous fashion—**stretch their duties nicely**: exert themselves to be as precise and accurate as possible in performing their duties.—**nicely**: punctiliously. Cf. v, 3, 144.

111-114. Kent parodies the style and manner of a 'silly-ducking observant.'—**in sincere verity**: an affected synonym for 'in good faith.'—**Under . . . influence**: with humble submission to the sovereign sway of your Highness, whose influence, etc. The antecedent of *whose* is *you* (i.e., 'of you').—**aspect**. An astrological term denoting the way in which a planet *looks upon* a man, i.e., with good or bad effect.—**influence**. Another astrological term. Cf. i, 2, 131.—**Phœbus' front**: the forehead of the sun—**mean'st**: meanest thou

117-120. **He that beguil'd you . . . to't**: I infer from what you have said that, in the past, some such rascal as you describe has deceived you. If so, he was an out-and-out knave—and *that* I will never be, even if I could induce you to lay aside your displeasure so far as to beg me to be one.

124, 125. **upon his misconstruction**: as the result of misinterpreting something he said—**conjunct**: taking the King's part, taking sides with him. The Quarto reading. The Folio has 'compact,' which means the same thing. Cf. v, 1, 12

128-130. **That worthied him**: as won honour for himself—**For . . . self-subdu'd**: for attacking one who submitted without a struggle.—**in the fleshmeat**: while still in the ferocious mood that this dread exploit produced. To *flesh* a dog was to 'make him fierce by feeding him on raw meat' The word was common in a figurative sense. Cf. *Henry V*, iii, 3, 11: 'The flesh'd soldier, rough and hard of heart.'

132. **Ajax is their fool**: the great hero Ajax is (by their own account) a fool in comparison with *them*—i.e., vastly their inferior. Cf. *Macbeth*, ii, 1, 44

133. **stubborn**: fierce, ferocious. Cf. *Winter's Tale*, iv, 4, 832: 'a stubborn bear.'—**reverent**: reverend.

137. **shall**: will assuredly.—**malice**: ill will. Not here used in the limited modern sense.

138. *grace and person.* As the King's messenger, Kent is to be treated with respect. Such a punishment would be not only an outrage on the King's *grace* (i.e., his royal honour) but a *personal* insult to him Cf. ll. 152-154.

144. *should:* would certainly.

146. *bring away:* bring along; bring hither.

148-152. *His fault . . . with.* Omitted in the Folios.

149 *check:* rebuke.

151. *pilfrings:* petty thefts.

154. *answer:* be accountable for.

157. *For . . . legs.* Omitted in the Folios.

161. *Will not be:* will not allow itself to be.—*rubb'd:* impeded, interfered with This sense comes from bowling. A *rub* is anything that hinders or deflects the course of the bowl. Cf. *Richard II.*, III, 4, 3, 4:

Lady Madam, we'll play at bowls.

Queen. 'Twill make me think the world is full of rubs.

162. *watch'd:* gone without sleep Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, iv, 3, 7, 8. 'You'll be sick to-morrow For this night's watching.'

164. *A good man's:* even a *good* man's.

165. *Give . . . morrow!* God give you good morning!

166. *to blame:* blameworthy, censurable

167. *must approve the common saw:* art fated, it seems, to exemplify the familiar saying.

168, 169. *Thou . . . sun!* The proverb describes bad judgment by the figure of one who, on a hot day, leaves a comfortable seat in the shade for a place in the sun Wright compares Lyly, *Euphues* (ed. Bond, II, 93; I, 322): 'Thou forsakest Gods blessing to sit in a warme Sunne,' and 'If thou wilt follow my aduise . . . thou shalt come out of a warme Sun into Gods blessing.' Cf. also *Euphues* (II, 170). 'In my opinion there is nothing either more repugnant to reason, or abhorring from nature, then to seeke that we shoulde shunne, leauing the cleare streame to drinke of the muddye ditch, or in the extremitie of heate to lye in the parching Sunne, when we may sleepe in the colde shadow'; Howell, *Dendrologia*, 1640,

p. 13: 'And now I am come from Gods blessing to the warme Sun, who is a little too prodigall of his beames here' See Tilley, *Elizabethan Proverb Lore*, pp 170, 171; Apperson, *English Proverbs*, p. 476 *God's blessing* for 'the shade' reminds one of *Isaiah*, xxxii, 2. 'as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.' Cf. *Psalm* cxxi, 5, 6, *Isaiah*, xxv, 4.

171. *comfortable*: comforting, helpful.

172, 173 *Nothing . . . misery*: for, when we are in despair, any relief seems miraculous.

175. *my obscured course*: my course of action in this disguise.—*shall find time*. Kent is reading from Cordelia's letter.

176. *this enormous state*: the present anomalous condition of the realm

177, 178. *o'erwatch'd*: worn out by lack of sleep. To *watch* often means to 'be awake.'—*Take vantage*: Take advantage of drowsiness.

180 *turn thy wheel*. On Fortune's wheel see the note on v, 3, 174.

Scene III.

This scene takes place on the same day as Scene ii.

1. *proclaim'd*. Cf. ii, 1, 82-85.

2. *happy*: opportune. Cf. iv, 6, 230.

3. *No port is free*. Cf. ii, 1, 82.

6. *am bethought*: it occurs to me, it comes to my mind.

8. *in contempt of man*: as if to show how contemptible a creature a man may be.

10. *elf . . . knots*. Matted and tangled locks of hair—due to neglect and filthy habits—were ascribed to the action of mischievous elves and hence called 'elflocks.' Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, i, 4, 90.

11. *presented*: meeting them boldly.—*outface*: defy.

13. *proof*: example.

14. *Bedlam beggars*. Cf. John Aubrey, *The Natural History*

of *Wiltshire*, II, 4 (ed. Britton, p. 93): 'Till the breaking out of the civill warres, Tom o' Bedlams did travell about the countrey. They had been poore distracted men that had been putt into Bedlam, where recovering to some sobernesse they were licentiated to goe a begging.' Bedlam was Bethlehem Hospital, the London hospital for lunatics, which was originally a priory of the religious order of the Star of Bethlehem. *Bedlam* is merely a shortened form of *Bethlehem*.

15. **mortified**: deadened by hardship and exposure. A stronger synonym of *numb'd*. In *Macbeth*, v, 2, 5, the word means 'paralyzed.' It never has the modern technical sense.

17, 18. **object**: sight, spectacle. Cf. v, 3, 238.—**low**: lowly, humble.—**pelting**: paltry, insignificant. Cf. *Richard II*, II, 1, 60: 'a tenement or pelting farm'—**sheepcotes**, and **mills**: both of which were often distant from any village.

19. **Sometime**: sometimes. Cf. IV, 3, 41.—**bans**: curses.

20. 'Poor Turlygod! poor Tom!' Edgar practises the Bedlam beggar's whine. Cf. III, 4, 51. For *Tom* cf. 'Tom o' Bedlam' (I, 2, 147). *Turlygod* seems to have been a name by which such a beggar sometimes called himself, but it occurs nowhere else.

21. **There's something yet! Edgar I nothing am**: As Poor Tom there is, after all, some hope for me. In my real character (*in propria persona*), as Edgar, I am as good as dead—i.e., I have no chance of preserving my life.

Scene IV.

This scene takes place on the day that was dawning at the end of Scene II—on the same day, therefore, as Scene III.

2. **my messenger**: i.e., Kent. See I, 5, 1.

7-11. **cruel**: with a pun on *crewel*, 'worsted'—**monkeys** by th' loins. Monkeys were kept as pets by the Elizabethan ladies (see *Merchant of Venice*, III, 1, 123, 124). Cf. Brome, *The*

Damoiselle, ii, 1 (Pearson ed, I, 396): 'I thought you had beene tyed up by the Loines, like a Monkey to the Bed-post'—**over-lusty at legs**: too vigorous in using his legs, too much of a vagabond.—**nether-stocks**: stockings Overstocks (upper stocks) were breeches Cf Harington, *Apology* (Chiswick ed, 1814, p. 26): 'Wooden stocks were fitter for them than silk stockings'; Lyly, *Mother Bombe*, v, 3 (ed. Fairholt, II, 133): 'I'll make you weare double stockes, and yet you shall be never the warmer' •By a similar jest Jonson calls the pillory 'a wooden collar' (*The Staple of News*, v, 6, Yale ed., p. 118).

12, 13. **thy place**: thy position as a king's messenger. Cf. ii, 2, 152-154—**To**: as to

• 19, 20 **Lear** . . . have. Omitted in the Folios.

22. **Kent**. By . . . ay! Omitted in the Quartos

24. **upon respect**: against the respect due to the King.

25-27. **Resolve me**: Explain to me. Cf. i, 2, 109.—**modest**: moderate.—**mightst**: couldst—**from us**: from me, the King

28 **commend**: hand over, deliver.

33-35. **letters**: a letter. See i, 3, 25; i, 4, 356-359—**spite of intermission**: in spite of the fact that it interrupted the audience they had granted me—**presently**: instantly. Cf. i. 118; i, 2, 110, i, 4, 159.—**on**: as the result of—**meiny**: household attendants.—**straight**: straightway. See i, 3, 25, note.

41, 42. **Display'd so saucily**: made such an impudent exhibition of himself.—**your Highness**: your Majesty.—**more man than wit**: more courage than common sense.—**drew**: I drew my sword.

46-55 Omitted in the Quartos

52-55. Fortune is often called a harlot because she shows favour to every man and is constant to none. Cf. *Macbeth*, i, 2, 15; *As You Like It*, i, 2, 35 (and notes).—**turns the key**: opens the door—**dolours**: sorrows—with a pun on *dollars*. Cf. *Tempest*, ii, 1, 19.—**for**: because of.—**tell**: relate—with a pun on *tell* in the sense of 'count.' Cf. iii, 2, 89.

56-58. **this mother**. The *mother* was the popular name for *hysterica passio*—'hysterical suffering,' 'hysteria.' Lear describes the symptoms—a feeling of distress rising from below toward

the heart. Thence it often ascends into the throat with the sensation of choking—called 'the hysteric ball.' Cf. l. 122. Richard Many, one of the supposed demoniacs in Harsnet's *Declaration*, 1603, suffered from 'the mother.' In his confession he says 'When I was sick of this disease in Fraunce, a Scottish Doctor of Physick then in *Paris*, called it, as I remember, *Vertiginem capitis*. It riseth (as he said, and I haue often felt) of a wind in the bottome of the belly, and proceeding with a great swelling, causeth a very painfull collicke in the stomack, and an extraordinary giddines in the head' (p. 263).—**thy element:** thy proper place.

64. **How chance:** How chances it.

66. **thou'dst well deserv'd it:** because it's a foolish question, since the answer is so obvious.

—68 ff. In a series of brief parables the Fool explains that Lear's fortunes are in a bad way, and that it is therefore not strange that he comes with so small a retinue.—**All that follow their noses.** To 'follow one's nose' is an old jocose idiom (still in use) for to 'go straight ahead in the direction in which one's nose points.'¹ 'All persons who follow a straight course of judgment accept the evidence of their eyes, if they have any eyes. And even the blind can follow their noses—can use the sense of smell as a guide. In the present instance, then, even a blind man could discover the facts of the case (the desperate condition of the King's fortunes), for among a score of noses there's surely not one that is not good enough to recognize a stench.'

79-82. **That sir . . . storm.** Cf. Ovid, *Tristia*, i, 9, 5, 6:

Donec eris felix, multos numerabis amicos.
Tempora si fuerint nubila, solus eris

—**pack:** be off, run away.

85, 86. **The knave . . . no knave:** The fellow that forsakes his master is (from the point of view of the higher wisdom)

¹Cf. Heywood, *The Royal King*, 1 (Pearson ed., VI, 9) 'Follow thy nose, and thou wilt be there presently.' See Apperson, *English Proverbs*, p. 222

a fool, since true wisdom implies fidelity; and the fool who, like me, remains faithful as, at all events, no knave.—perdy: assuredly (*par dieu*).

89-91. Deny: refuse—²fetches: pretences, pretexts.—The images: the plainest possible signs. *Image* means, literally, 'the exact figure or likeness.' Cf. iv, 6, 162; v, 3, 264—revolt and flying off. To explain or emphasize a word by adding a synonym is one of the commonest of rhetorical devices. So 'numb'd and mortified' (ii, 3, 15); 'indispos'd and sickly' (i, 112), 'proof and precedent' (ii, 3, 13); 'spies and speculations' (iii, 1, 24), cataracts and hurricanes' (iii, 2, 2).¹

93. quality: character

* 96 A string of curses.—confusion! ruin, destruction. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, ii, 5, 92. 'The gods confound thee!'

97. What quality? What has his character to do with the matter?

99, 100. Glou. Well . . . man? Omitted in the Quartos

104. My breath and blood! Upon my life! Another oath, used merely as a passionate exclamation. The Quartos omit the line.

107. neglect: omit, leave undone.—office: service, duty. Cf. i, 181, ii, 1, 108; iii, 1, 42.

111, 112. am fallen out with: am angry with.—more headier: too impulsive.—will: impulse.—To take: for taking.

113, 114. Death on my state! Another curse.—my state: my royal power.—he. Emphatic.

115-118. this remotion: this keeping away from me; this avoidance of an interview. So Tate understood *remotion*. In his *King Lear* he substitutes 'this retiredness.' Cf. ll. 89-91.—practice: trickery. See i, 2, 198, note—Give . . . forth: Release (from the stocks)—and's: and his.—presently: instantly. Cf. i, 34, i, 2, 110; i, 4, 159

120. cry sleep to death: make sleep impossible by its din.

123-126. *Cockney* has various meanings: 'spoiled child,'

¹See also i, 1, 232, i, 2, 47, i, 4, 75, 285, ii, 4, 254; iii, 4, 31, iv, 1, 63, iv, 2, 34, iv, 6, 39, 71; v, 3, 133, 145, 288, 301

'pampered darling'; 'cook'; 'Londoner'.¹ Here it seems to denote a city woman, unfamiliar with such vulgar things as the making of eel pies. She has had no experience with live eels and does not even know that they must be killed before baking. When they tried to squirm out of the dish, she knapped (rapped) them on their silly heads and cried, 'Down, you playful creatures, down'—knapp'd. The Folio reading (*knapt*). The Quartos have *rapt*, which means the same thing—wanton. Cf. iv, 1, 36; *Winter's Tale*, i, 2, 126: 'How now, you wanton calf?' 1 *Henry IV*, iv, 1, 103: 'wanton as youthful goats.'—her brother; a member of the same family of fools; another fool of the same breed—battered. Spoken with amused emphasis.

129. your Grace! your Majesty. *Cf. i. 190; iii, 4, 130, 147.

—134. Sepulchring: as being the tomb of

136. naught: wicked Cf. iii, 7, 37; *Macbeth*, iv, 3, 225: 'Naught that I am.'

137. like a vulture. Such allusions to the torment of Prometheus are common

139 quality. Cf. i. 93.

140. take patience: be calm.

141, 142. You less . . . duty: She does not come short in doing her duty to you. The trouble is, that you cannot appreciate her merits.—scant. *This repeats the negative idea, but the double negative does not make an affirmative. In modern English we should say 'to do her duty.'

142-147. Lear. Say . . . blame. Omitted in the Quartos.

151. your state: your condition of mind.

153 make return: go back again

155. becomes the house: befits family relations. Spoken with

¹Fynes Morison, *Itinerary*, 1617, Part III, i, 3, p. 53: 'Londiners, and all within the sound of Bow-Bell, are in reproch called Cocknies, and eaters of buttered tostes', Rowlands, *The Letting of Humours Blood*, 1600 (Huntarian Club ed., p. 65) 'I scorne (that am a younster of our towne) To let a Bowe-bell Cockney put me downe', *Caning Dictionary*, appended to *Bacchus and Venus*, 1737: 'cockney, born within the Sound of Bow-bell (in London) also one ignorant in Country Matters.'

bitter irony: fathers would not kneel to their children in any normal family. Schmidt compares the horrified protest of Coriolanus (v, 3, 56 ff.) when his mother kneels to him.

157. **Age is unnecessary.** Old folk are of no use in the world.

165-170. Lear prays that Goneril may be smitten with lameness and blindness and that her beauty may be blasted with ugliness.

165. **her young bones.** The context makes it certain that this applies to Goneril's own youthful frame. 'To breed young bones' is, to be sure, an old phrase for 'to be with child,' but that does not justify the strange interpretation ('Strike her unborn child') which has found favour with some critics.

166. **taking:** infectious.

168-170. **Infect . . . pride!** Cf. i, 4, 321: 'Blasts and fogs upon thee!'—**fens-suck'd fogs.** Cf. Marlowe, *1 Tamburlaine*, iv, 2 (ed. Dyce, I, 75, 76).

Make heaven to frown, and every fixed star
To suck up poison from the moorish fens,
And pour it in this glorious tyrant's throat!

—**To fall:** to fall upon her—not (as some editors think), to cause to fall, to humble

172. **rash:** hasty. Cf. i, 1, 153, 298.

174. **tender-hefted.** If the reading (which is that of the Folios) is correct, this must mean 'heaved (i.e., moved, swayed, governed) by tender emotions only.' Steevens notes that Shakespeare uses *hefts* for 'hevings' in *The Winter's Tale*, ii, 1, 45. *Heft* is also a by-form of *haft* (handle), and Wright interprets *tender-hefted* as 'set in a tender handle or delicate bodily frame'; but this seems too grotesque to be probable; nor does it fit the context, for it is the tenderness of Regan's *nature*, not of her *bodily frame*, that Lear has in mind. The First and Second Quartos have *tender hested*, which (since a *hest* is a command) might possibly mean 'a nature which is governed by gentle dispositions' (Steevens). Rowe's conjecture—*tender-hearted*—is adopted by Pope but is not very felicitous.

178. **bandy.** See i, 4, 91, note.—**sizes:** allowances.

181, 182. **offices:** duties.—**bond of childhood:** a child's duty toward a parent. Cf. i, 1, 95 —**Effects:** actions. Cf. i, 1, 188. 'That good effects may spring from words of love.'

184. **Tucket.** See ii, 1, 80, note —**'within:** behind the scenes

186 **approves:** confirms. Cf. ii, 2, 167.

188. **easy-borrowed pride:** easily borrowed because it does not take much to make him proud

190. **varlet:** fellow. A common term of contempt.

194. **Allow:** approve.—**are old:** so that you may well sympathize with old men in their troubles

196. **Art:** art thou. Cf. ii, 2, 1, iii, 2, 68; iv, 6, 153.

202. **disorders:** misconduct

203. **much less advancement:** far less honour than that

204. **seem so:** i.e., be content to speak and act like a feeble old man, and submit without protest to those who have you in charge.

209. **shall be:** will certainly be —**entertainment:** proper maintenance, care and attention

212 **To wage against:** to wage war with, to meet in a contest of strength.

214. **Necessity's sharp pinch!** This sums up (as an appositive) what precedes (ll. 211-213). It is the hard lot of poverty to be homeless and exposed to cold and storm

217-220. **knee:** kneel before.—**squire-like:** as if I were one of his attendants.—**sumpter:** packhorse, beast of burden.—**detested groom:** detestable underling Cf. i, 2, 81; i, 4, 284.

221 **do not make me mad.** Cf. i, 289. See Introduction

227. **embossed.** headed; rising in a round knob (like the boss of a shield). Cf. *As You Like It*, ii, 7, 67: 'embossed sores and headed evils'

230, 231. **the Thunder-bearer:** Jupiter —**shoot:** dart his thunderbolts at thee.—**high-judging Jove:** Jove, the almighty judge.

237, 238. **that mangle reason with your passion:** who consider your violent words and actions in the light of reason and can tell you what such conduct means.—**old.** She breaks off abruptly, with a gesture: 'You are *old*—and no further explanation is necessary!'

240 **avouch it:** stand by it, affirm it as sound doctrine.

242. **sith that:** since. See 1, 1, 251, note—**charge:** expense.

248, 249. **slack:** neglect.—**control:** regulate.

252. **notice:** recognition.

253. **And in good time you gave it!** A characteristic interruption by the soft-spoken but venomous Regan.

254. **Made you my guardians:** entrusted all my possessions to your care.—**depositories.** Synonymous with *guardians*.

259. **Those wicked creatures.** The demonstrative *those* has no personal application. Lear's remark is a general truth: 'Such creatures as are wicked always have a good appearance in contrast with others that are more wicked.' Steevens compares *Cymbeline*, v, 5, 215-217.

It is I

That all th' abhorred things o' th' earth amend

By being worse than they

—**well-favour'd:** fair, handsome

265. **To follow:** to be your followers, your attendants.

267-274 Lear distinguishes between absolute necessity (in which sense his daughters have used the word *need*) and that which may be properly regarded as necessary for comfort and dignity. But he breaks off abruptly when about to define 'true need' (l. 273); for the thought forces itself upon him that the one thing he really *needs* is the gift of *patience* (i.e., fortitude), which may keep him from the shame of tears.

267-269 **Our basest beggars . . . superfluous:** The most miserable beggars have some things among their poorest possessions that they do not actually need—that they could get along without—**superfluous:** possessed of more than merely enough. Cf. iv, 1, 68 The old story of Diogenes illustrates Lear's point. He had taken with him only such things as he thought absolutely essential to life. Among them was a drinking cup. This he threw away when he saw a boy at a brook drinking water out of his hand.—**needs.** Emphatic. '*needs* in the strict sense of the word.'

271, 272. **If . . . wear'st:** If mere warmth were all the gorgeousness that a lady required of her apparel, then the gorgeous-

ness of your attire would not be needed; for gorgeousness is certainly not—like warmth—a *natural* necessity.

274. *that patience . . . need!* that degree of fortitude (strength to endure suffering) that my case requires—it is fortitude that I need!

278, 279. *fool me not so much:* Do not make me so much of a weakling.—*To:* as to.

280. *women's weapons, water drops.* That tears are womanish is an idea often repeated in Shakespeare. Cf. *Macbeth*, iv, 2, 29, and note.

285. *The terrors of the earth:* things so terrible as to affright the whole world.

288, 289. *flaws:* fragments.—*Or ere.* *Or* and *ere* both mean 'before'. The phrase is a kind of reduplication.—*I shall go mad!* Cf. l. 221. See Introduction.

291, 292. *and 's:* and his. Cf. l. 117.—*bestow'd:* lodged, accommodated. Cf. iv, 6, 293.

293, 294. *hath:* he hath.—*taste his folly:* suffer the consequences of his folly.

295. *For his particular:* as for him in particular; so far as concerns him personally—not, for his own sake.

299, 300. *Corn. Whither . . . horse.* Omitted in the Quartos.

301. *to give him way:* not to hinder his departure.—*he leads himself:* he submits to no guidance; he insists on having his own way.

304. *ruffle:* rage. A strong word. A *ruffler* is a brawling ruffian. Cf. Studley's *Medea* (*Seneca his Tenne Tragedies*, 1581, ed. *Tudor Translations*, II, 74): 'Sturdy seas (whom ruffling winds with raging force to rore)'; Greene, *Friar Bacon*, ii, 4 (ed. Collins, II, 41) 'Heres a companie of rufflers that, drinking in the Tauerne, haue made a great braule, and almost kilde the vintner.'

308-310. *with: by.*—*a desperate train.* Regan, like Goneril, shamelessly misrepresents the character of Lear's Knights. See i, 4, 61, note.—*incense:* instigate.—*apt:* ready. Much more active in sense than in modern usage. Cf. iv, 2, 65.—*abus'd:* deceived.

ACT III. Scene I.

This scene takes place on the same day as ii, 4, with which it is practically continuous. Gloucester 'follows' Lear 'forth' at ii, 4, 289, returns (ii, 4, 298), and then goes out to rejoin Lear, pretending that he is 'ill and gone to bed' (iii, 3, 18). Meanwhile Kent has been separated from Lear in the storm but means to search for him. He finds him at iii, 2, 36.

6-9. **the main:** the land.—**things:** the world, the whole order of nature.—**eyeless:** blind—since they rage at everything without discrimination or definite object—**make nothing of:** show no respect for

7-15. **tears . . . take all.** Omitted in the Folios.

10. **his little world of man.** A man is a microcosm ('a little cosmos,' 'a universe in miniature') in comparison with the *macrocosm*, 'the great cosmos.' Cf. iv, 6, 137.

12. **cub-drawn:** 'with udders all drawn dry' by her cubs (*As You Like It*, iv, 3, 115), and therefore wild with hunger. Cf. *Arden of Feversham*, ii, 2, 118-120 (ed. Brooke, *Shakespeare Apocrypha*, p. 14):

Such mercy as the staruen Lyones,
When she is dry suckt of her eager young,
Showes to the prey that next encounters her.

—**couch:** lie hidden from the storm

15. **bids . . . take all.** 'Take all' is the cry of the gambler when he stakes, at a final cast of the dice, all the money that he has left. Hence it is used figuratively as a cry of despair or desperate defiance. Cf. *The Weakest Goeth to the Wall*, 1600 (Malone Society ed., l. 401): 'Let him take all'; Daniel, *The Civil War*, vii, 20. 'He resolves, whatever shall befall, To set up 's rest, to venture now for all'; *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv, 2, 7, 8:

Antony Woo't thou fight well?
Enobarbus. I'll strike, and cry 'Take all!'

16. **to outjest:** to relieve by his jests. It is the Fool's tragedy that his efforts to cheer up his master serve only to emphasize Lear's folly and its dreadful results, for the Fool's mind instinctively concentrates on that one idea and he calls Lear 'fool' over and over again.

18, 19. **note:** knowledge of you—**Commend:** intrust—a **dear thing:** an important matter.

22-29. **Who have . . . furnishings.** Omitted in the Quartos.

23. **no less:** nothing more or less than servants."

24-26. **speculations.** Synonymous with *spies*.—**Intelligent of our state:** giving information about our government. Cf. iii, 5, 12; iii, 7, 11—**What hath been seen:** what has been already discernible—**snuffs:** cases in which they have openly taken offence at each other's actions. *To take anything in snuff* is ~~to~~ 'resent it strongly.' The phrase comes from the way in which some persons show anger—by drawing in the breath audibly through the nostrils.—**packings:** plots, secret machinations. Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, v, 1, 121, 122: 'Here's packing . . . to deceive us all!'

29-31. **furnishings:** pretexts that conceal the real purpose of the French invasion. Kent does not finish his sentence. He means: 'For some reason, the French are invading Britain—whether because of what spies have informed them about the quarrels and plots of the Dukes or about their harsh treatment of the King, or, perhaps, for some purpose that the invaders conceal, using these things as pretexts. What the facts are, I do not know; but, at all events, it is certain that the French have actually landed.'—**a power:** an armed troop. Cf. iii, 3, 12; iv, 2, 16; iv, 3, 50; iv, 4, 21; iv, 5, 1; iv, 7, 93; v, 1, 51; v, 3, 63—**scattered:** 'divided, disunited' (Johnson).

30-42. **But, true . . . to you.** Omitted in the Folios

33, 34. **at point:** fully prepared; all ready. Cf. i, 4, 347; *Macbeth*, iv, 3, 134, 135.—**open:** Emphatic.

35, 56. **my credit:** your trust in me.—**To:** as to.

37-39. **making:** if you make.—**just:** true and accurate—**plain:** complain.

41, 42. **assurance:** trustworthy information.—**office:** duty.

45 out-wall. Kent wears the garb of a servingman. See iv, 7, 6-11.

48. your fellow: your companion; your associate in the King's service. Thus Kent confirms the suggestion that he is a more important person than his present position would indicate.

52. to effect: in effect; in importance.

53, 54. in which your pain That way. With a gesture 'Use your best efforts to find him in that direction.' Omitted in the Quartos. *Pain* for *pains* is common.—I'll this: I'll seek him in *this* direction.

Scene II.

This scene takes place in the stormy night mentioned at the end of ii, 4. Kent, who has been seeking Lear (iii, 1, 53-55), finds him and conducts him toward a hovel that is 'hard by' (i. 61).

1 cheeks, rage. Prolonged in utterance with a change in pitch and each counting for two syllables. Cf. iv, 2, 26.

2, 3. cataracts and hurricanoes. Synonymous: 'water-spouts.' Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, v, 2, 171, 172: 'The dreadful spout Which shipmen do the hurricano call.'—cocks: weathercocks

4, 5. thought-executing: 'doing execution with rapidity equal to thought' (Johnson). This interpretation, as Pringle Barret remarks (*Modern Language Notes*, XLIII [1928], 316, 317), is supported by the parallel passage in *The Tempest*, i, 2, 201-203:

Jove's lightnings, the precursors
O' th' dreadful thunderclaps, more momentary
And sight-outrunning were not

—thunderbolts. Fiery bolts, or stone missiles, were supposed to be discharged from the clouds by the thunder. Cf. *Julius Caesar*, i, 3, 49, and note; *Cymbeline*, iv, 2, 270, 271:

Fear no more the lightning flash—
Nor th' all-dreaded thunder-stone

8. **Nature's moulds:** the moulds which Nature uses in forming men.—**germains:** seeds—**spill:** destroy. Cf. *Hamlet*, iv, 5, 20

10-12. **court holy water.** Malone quotes Cotgrave's *Dictionnaire*, 1632, sig. Ff. 1j: '*Eau beuiste de Cour* Court holy water; complements, faire words, flattering speeches, glosing, soothing, palpable cogging.' Cf. Mabbe, *The Rogue*, ii, 5 (ed. *Tudor Translations*, III, 271). 'Offered to doe him any kinnesse that lay in his power; nor were they Courtiers words, sprinkled with holy-water, for he did as well doe, as say'; *Jacke Strawe*, D3, lf. 2 v^o: 'They haue giuen vs a little holy water at the Court' 'Court holy bread' was used in the same sense. Cf. Dekker and Webster, *Westward Ho*, II (Pearson ed. II, 310): 'He feedes thee with nothing but Court holy bread, good words, and cares not for thee'—ask thy daughters blessing! ask a blessing from your daughters. *Ask* (like *cry* in ll. 58, 59) takes two objects (the person and the thing) Cf. v, 3, 10: 'When thou dost ask me blessing.'

15-18. **fire.** Dissyllabic.—**tax not you . . . with:** do not accuse you of.—**subscription:** submission, obedience.

21. **ministers:** agents.

23. **high-engender'd:** engendered high in the heavens There is also a suggestion of the meaning 'sublime'—**battles:** battalions, armies.

25, 26 **put's:** put his.—**a good headpiece.** The Fool puns on two senses of the phrase: (1) a good helmet, covering for the head, and (2) a good head—i.e., a wise brain.

27-30. **The . . . many:** The man who begets children before he has a house will surely become a lousy vagabond. Thus it is that many beggars get married.

31-34. **The man . . . wake:** The man who exchanges the places of his toe and his heart will get a corn on his heart instead of on his foot, and that will give him such a heartache as will keep him awake nights. The Fool alludes to Lear's folly in showing favour to Goneril and Regan and disowning *Cordelia*. Cf. Greene, *Euphues his Censure to Philautus*, 1587 (ed. Grosart, VI, 191): 'Finding it folly to sett that at his heart which other set at their heele'

35, 36. A mere bit of Fool's nonsense, such as was often used to distract attention from too keen a piece of satire. The Fool instinctively plays the tricks of his profession Cf. 1, 4, 237, 245.—**made** . . . **glass**: practised making pretty faces in a mirror Cf. *Winter's Tale*, 1, 2, 116, 117. 'Making practis'd smiles As in a looking glass'

40, 41 **Marry**. Originally an oath by the Virgin Mary, but used as a mere exclamation.—**grace**: an honourable person.—**that's a wise man and a fool**. He leaves it to Kent to decide which is which.

44. **Gallow**: terrify A very strong word. Whalemén still use *gallied* to describe a whale that is panic-stricken.

48, 49 **cannot carry** . . . **fear**: cannot bear up under the actual bodily affliction (the buffeting by the storm) and the terror that accompanies it.

50. **pudder**: hubbub, turmoil The same word as *pothier*.

51. **Find out**: i.e., by the terror which such offenders must show.

53. **of**: by.

54-57. **thou simular man of virtue**: thou man that wearest the guise of virtue.—**Caitiff**: wretch Cf. ii, 1, 64.—**under covert** . . . **seeming**: under such an appearance of conventional virtue as masked thy purpose—**practis'd on**: plotted against See 1, 2, 198, note.

58, 59. **Rive** . . . **grace**: Break open the concealments that hide you, and appeal to these dreadful summoners for mercy. A *summoner* is an officer who summons offenders to an ecclesiastical court. For the construction cf. 'ask thy daughters blessing' (ll. 11, 12).—**I**. Emphatic. Thus Lear points out his reason for not fearing the storm.

61, 62 **Gracious my lord**. See 1, 1, 97, note.—**lend**: afford.

65, 66. **demanding after you**: asking for you.—**Denied**: prohibited, forbade.

67. **My wits begin to turn**. The first intimation of Lear's delirium. Cf. iii, 4, 167. See Introduction.

70, 71. **art**. The figure alludes to alchemy, which professed to turn base metals into gold and silver. Cf Marlowe and

Nashe, *Dido, Queen of Carthage* (ed. Dyce, II, 373). 'See, what strange arts necessity finds out!' The proverb reminds us that 'necessity is the mother of invention' (see Apperson, *English Proverbs*, p. 439) —vile: worthless.

72. knave. See i, 1, 22, note.

74-77 Compare the Fool's song at the end of *Twelfth Night*. For the tune see Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, I, 225.—and a. The *and* has no meaning. It merely serves to carry a note in the tune.—Must . . . fit: must make his happiness fit his fortunes; must be contented and happy, even when his fortunes are bad.

78. True. Lear accepts the Fool's saying as applicable to himself.

79-95. This passage is in the Folios, but the Quartos lack it. Most critics regard it as an interpolation. The verses are a parody of an old epigram entitled 'Merlin's Prophecy.' The original (well-known in Shakespeare's time) was commonly, though absurdly, ascribed to Chaucer.¹ It runs as follows in Thynne's edition of Chaucer, 1532

Whan faithe fayleth in preestes sawes
And lordes hestes are holden for lawes
And robbery is holden purchase
And lechery is holden solace
Than shal the londe of albyon
Be broght to great confusyon.

79. brave: fine, splendid.

81. more in word than matter: better in talk than in substance; or better in preaching than in practice.

83. their tailors' tutors: even greater experts in clothing than the tailors they employ. Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, IV, 3, 86 ff., where Petruchio acts as the tailor's tutor.

86. nor no. See i, 2, 103, note.

88. cutpurses: literally, thieves who slash purses (worn as

¹As, for instance, by Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, 1589, III, p. 187 (quoted by Steevens). See Skeat, *Chaucerian and Other Pieces*, 1897, pp. lxxxii, lxxxiii, 450; Carleton Brown, *A Register of Middle English Religious & Didactic Verse*, II (1920), pp. 375, 380.

a pouch at the girdle) and steal the contents; then, in general, pickpockets.

89. **tell:** count. Cf. ii, 4, 55.

91. **Albion.** An old name for Britain.

92. **confusion:** a ruinous condition.

93. **who:** if anybody.

94. **That going . . . feet:** when feet shall be used for walking. An intentionally absurd truism—such as fools frequently pronounced with a solemn air as a burlesque on the philosophers' profound adages. The audience is at liberty to make it mean: 'The world shall once more be in a normal condition.'

95. **This . . . time.** This line makes the Fool a real prophet, for Merlin's date was centuries later than Lear's. He is the seer of the Arthurian legend.

Scene III

The same stormy night as in Scene ii. Gloucester means to find Lear and relieve him. He finds him in the next scene (iii, 4, 133).

6. **nor any way sustain him:** nor do anything whatever to relieve him. Cf. iii, 4, 168: 'His daughters seek his death.'

8. **Go to:** Enough! This phrase means, literally, 'Go away!' and, like our colloquial 'Go way!' (which is an old idiom), may be used in expostulation, reproof, impatience, or incredulity. Sometimes it merely closes or shuts off discourse, like 'Very well' or 'Enough said!' Cf. i, 4, 102; iv, 6, 105.

11. **closet.** See i, 2, 65.

12-21. **home:** to the utmost. Cf. iii, 4, 16. The figure comes from a 'home thrust'—a **power:** an army—**footed:** landed. Cf. iii, 7, 45.—**incline to:** take part with, take the side of.—**privily:** secretly. See iii, 4, 153 ff.—**of him:** by him.—**toward:** in preparation; coming. Cf. ii, 1, 11, iv, 6, 213.

22. **forbid:** forbidden. See ii, 4, 300-312.

24. **This seems . . . deserving:** My giving the Duke this information will seem to him a good piece of service.

Scene IV.

The same stormy night as in Scene III. Gloucester finds Lear (l. 120) and leads him to a farmhouse for shelter (ll. 157 ff.).

1. **Good my lord.** See i, 1, 97, note.

2. **The tyranny of the open night:** the boisterous roughness of such a night in the open air.

3. **nature:** a man's natural strength

11. **free:** untroubled; at peace Cf. III, 6, 111; IV, 6, 80.

14. **beats there:** throbs in my mind and heart *There* is emphatic.

15. **as:** as if. Cf. II, 2, 88; V, 3, 201, 213.

16. **home!** Cf. II, 1, 53, III, 3, 12.

17, 18. **In such . . . endure.** Omitted in the Quartos.

20. **frank:** free, generous.

25. **would:** that would Cf. I, 4, 65.

26, 27. **In . . . sleep.** Omitted in the Quartos.—**You houseless poverty.** Synonymous with 'Poor naked wretches' (l. 28). Abstract for concrete. Cf. 'pomp' (l. 33).

29. **bide:** suffer, endure.

31. **loop'd and window'd.** Synonymous: 'full of holes.' A *loop* is, literally, a 'loophole'

33. **Take physic, pomp:** O ye great and mighty ones of the earth, take this remedy to cure your unfeeling hearts.

35, 36. **That . . . just:** That you may cast off what you do not need ('the superfluous,' superfluity) and bestow it on them, and so may make God's treatment of humanity more impartial than it now seems to be. Precisely the same lesson is expressed by Gloucester in IV, 1, 66-72.

That I am wretched
Makes thee the happier. Heavens, deal so still!
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he does not feel, feel your pow'r quickly,
So distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough.

37, 38. **Edg. Fathom . . . Tom!** Omitted in the Quartos — **Fathom and half!** Edgar speaks as if he were a sailor sounding the depth of the water in the hold of a leaking ship. He is almost 'swamped' by the storm. Capell imagines that he alludes to 'his being bury'd in straw'!

47, 48. **Humh!** The interjection expresses his shivering with cold—**go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.** Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, Induction, 1, 10.

51 ff. Edgar, taking his cue from Lear's word 'given,' repeats the kind of petition expected of Bedlam beggars, who 'enforce charity' with 'prayers' as well as 'with lunatic bans' (ii, 3, 13 ff.)

53-55. **that:** who. The antecedent is *fiend*—**hath laid knives,** etc: i.e., to tempt him to kill himself. For the idea that a demon may prompt or aid a man to commit suicide see iv, 6, 67-79, and *Hamlet*, i, 4, 69-78. In Green and Lodge, *A Looking Glass for London*, 1594 (ed. Grosart, XIV, 98), is the stage direction: 'The Euill Angel tempteth him, offering the knife and rope.' Cf. Marlowe, *Faustus* (ed. Dyce, II, 36):

Poison, guns, halters, and envenom'd steel
Are laid before me to despatch myself.

So in Harsnet's *Declaration*, 1603, p. 219: 'This exam[inant]: further saith, that one *Alexander* an Apothecarie, hauing brought with him from London to *Denham* on a time a new halter, and two blades of knives, did leaue the same, vpon the gallerie floare in her Maisters house. . . . Ma[ister]: *Mainy* in his next fit said, as it was reported, that the deuill layd them in the Gallery, that some of those that were possessed, might either hang themselues with the halter, or kil themselues with the blades.—**pew:** a gallery in a house or outside a chamber window—not, a pew in church.

56 **four-inch'd bridges.** Craig compares Jonson, *The Mag-netic Lady*, v, 8 (ed. Herford and Simpson, VI, 589):

H' has done the noblest cure here, i' the house,
On a poore Squire, my sister's Taylor, Needle,

That talk'd in's sleepe, would walke to Saint Iohn's wood,
 And Watham Forrest, scape by all the ponds,
 And pits i' the way, run over two-inch bridges,
 With his eyes fast, and i' the dead of night!

—course: chase.

57. Bless: God bless —thy five wits; thy five mental powers. In Stephen Hawes (*The Pastime of Pleasure*, cap 24, cited by Malone) the five wits are enumerated common wit; imagination, fantasy, estimation, and memory. Cf iii, 6, 60; *Sonne* 141.—O, do de, do de, do de. He is shuddering with cold Cf. iii, 6, 78.

58. star-blasting. Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, ii, 4, 14, 15:

If I do wake, some planet strike me down,
 That I may slumber an eternal sleep!

—taking! infection, the stroke of disease. Cf ii, 4, 166; *Richard II*, i, 4, 54, 55: 'Old John of Gaunt is grievous sick, my lord, Suddenly taken.'

59-61. There could I have him now, etc Edgar makes grabs at different parts of his body as if to catch vermin—or devils Cf iii, 6, 18: 'The foul fiend bites my back.'

66. this pass: this desperate condition

69. pendulous: overhanging. In the context the word suggests 'low-hanging,' 'brooding over us.' Cf *Richard II*, i, 3, 283, 284. 'Suppose Devouring pestilence hangs in our air'; iii, 3, 85-88:

Yet know, my master, God omnipotent,
 Is mustering in his clouds on our behalf
 Armies of pestilence, and they shall strike
 Your children yet unborn.

72, 73. subdu'd: reduced. —nature: a man's natural powers.—unkind. For the accent see i, 1, 231, note.

75. thus little mercy on their flesh? Edgar has gone so far in his impersonation of a Bedlam beggar as to pierce his arms with splinters or thorns. See ii, 3, 15, 16.

76. Judicious: well-judged; just and fitting; condign.

77. *pelican*. Wright quotes *Batman vppon Bartholome*, xii, 29, ed. 1582, fol. 186 v^o: 'The Pellican loueth too much her children For when the children bee haught, and begin to waxe hoare, they smite the father and the mother in the face.' Cf. *Richard II*, ii, 1, 126, 127.

78. *Pillicock*. Edgar, in pretended madness, echoes Lear's word 'pelican,' distorting it to 'Pillicock' (a term of comic endearment) and reciting part of a nursery rhyme Collier quotes a couplet from *Gammer Gurton's Garland* (ed. Ritson, 1810, p. 36):

Pillycock, pillycock sate on a hull
If he's not gone, he sits therestill.

But there is no evidence that this couplet is very old.—'Allow . . . loo! A wild 'halloo,' as if he were calling a hawk. Cf. *Hamlet*, i, 5, 116: 'Hillo, ho, ho, boy! Come, bird, come.' In *Troilus and Cressida*, v, 7, 10, 11, Thersites uses 'loo' as a cry to urge Paris to the combat, as if Paris were a dog and Menelaus a bull in a bull-baiting match. 'Now, bull! now, dog! 'Loo, Paris, 'loo!'

82-84. *obey thy parents*, etc. Edgar speaks solemnly as if he were trying to recite the Ten Commandments.—*justly*: exactly, scrupulously.—*commit*: commit adultery.

88. *wore gloves in my cap*. To wear a lady's glove in the cap was a common attention on the part of a gallant. Cf. Lyly, *Midas*, ii, 1 (ed. Bond, II, 125): 'Souldiers haue begged almes of Artificers, and with their helmet on their head been glad to follow a Louer with a gloue in his hatte'; Lyly, *Campaspe*, iv, 3 (ed. Bond, II, 347, 348): 'O Phillip, wert thou aliue to see this alteration, thy men turned to women, thy soldiers to louers, gloues worne in veluet caps in steede of plumes in grauen helmets'

92, 93. *out-paramour'd*: surpassed in the number of my mistresses.—*the Turk*: the Great Turk, the Sultan—*light of ear*: 'credulous of evil, ready to listen and receive malicious reports' (Johnson). Cf. *The Schole-House of Women*, ll. 43-49 (ed. Hazlitt, *Early Popular Poetry*, IV, 107):

- wav'd, *adj*, iv, 6, 71
 wawl, to squawk, cry, iv, 6, 184
 wax (to give him), ii, 4, 301
 ways (come your), come on, ii, 2, 42
 we (*the royal*), i, 1, 37, ii, 1, 116, ii, 4, 27, v, 3, 298
 weal, condition of the state, i, 4, 230
 web and the pin (the), cataract, iii, 4, 121, 122
 weeds, garments, clothes, iv, 7, 7
 well-favour'd, fair, handsome, ii, 4, 259
 what, whatever, i, 1, 58, whoever and of whatever rank, v, 3, 97
 wheel (Fortune's), ii, 2, 180 v, 3, 174 (note)
 whelk'd, *adj*, iv, 6, 71
 where, whereas, i, 2, 88
 where, *n*, i, 1, 264
 whereof, with which, i, 4, 241
 which, who, v, 3, 51, whom, i, 4, 256
 while, while, ii, 3, 5
 whistle (worth the), iv, 2, 29
 white herring, fresh herring, iii, 6, 33
 who, whom, v, 3, 248
 who stirs? i, 1, 128
 wide, wide of the mark, distracted, iv, 7, 50
 wield the matter, i, 1, 56
 will, impulse, ii, 4, 111, desire, lust, iv, 6, 278
 wilt, wilt thou, iii, 4, 4
 win your displeasure, ii, 2, 119
 wind me into, i, 2, 105
 window'd, full of holes, iii, 4, 31
 winged vengeance, iii, 7, 66
 wisdom of nature, i, 2, 113
 with, by, i, 1, 207, ii, 4, 256, 308
 withal, with it, i, 2, 111
 within, behind the scenes, ii, 1, 80; v, 2, 4
 Withold (Saint), ii, 4, 125
 wits (we), ii, 4, 57, iii, 6, 60
 wolvisch, wolnsh, i, 4, 330
 word, watchword, motto, iii, 4, 188, countersign, iv, 6, 93
 worser spirit, iv, 6, 222
 worship, honour, i, 4, 288
 worsted-stocking, *adj*, ii, 2, 17
 worth, property, possessions, iv, 4, 10
 worth the whistle, iv, 2, 29
 worthy, *adj*, noble, honourable, ii, 1, 61, v, 3, 178
 worthy, *v*, to win honour for, ii, 2, 128
 wrath, the object of one's anger, i, 1, 124
 writ, *p p*, written, i, 2, 94, i, 4, 354, 357, ii, 1, 124
 write, to write down one's name as, v, 3, 35
 wrought, *p p*, worked out, iv, 7, 96
 year, *pl*, years, iii, 4, 145
 yeoman, iii, 6, 114
 yet (*emphatic*), i, 1, 226, i, 4, 327, iv, 6, 62, v, 3, 239
 young bones, ii, 4, 165
 your Grace, your Majesty, ii, 4, 129, 190, iii, 4, 130, 147
 your Highness, your Majesty, i, 1, 78; ii, 4, 41, 130
 youth (of), youthful, i, 4, 306
 zed, the letter z, ii, 2, 69
 zir, sir, iv, 6, 240
 zo, so, iv, 6, 244
 zwagger'd, *p p*, swaggered, iv, 6, 243